FAMILY HERALD

A Domestic Magazine of Useful Information and Amusement.

HE WHO PUTS A BAD CONSTRUCTION UPON A GOOD ACT, REVEALS HIS OWN WICKEDNESS AT HEART.

WOE UNTO THOSE WHO FIND A PEARL IN THE STREAM OF LIFE, AND FLING IT HEEDLESSLY AWAY.

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FRIENDSHIP AND LOVE.

They met ere fame or fortune dawn'd,
When sorrow wrung his heart;
No faithful friend, no kindred sigh,
A solace to impart.
She saw him bow'd by silent grief,
With dim and hollow eye;
Regret and pity fill'd her breast,
And echoed back his sigh;
She sought to soothe his spirit sore,
This sadness to remove,
Contented if she saw him smile;
But yet they did not love.

And when the tide of fortune changed,
When friends around him came,
When kin were proud his name to own,
Rejoicing in his fame;
Then she who with a sister's care
Had strewn his path with flowers,
Was soon forgotten in the maze
Of Pleasure's gladsome bowers.
Alone she wander'd through the scenes
Where they were wont to rove,
And while she sigh'd to hear his voice,
She never deem'd she loved.

He revell'd oft in lordly hall,
He joined in Folly's train;
But fashion's gauds were valueless,
And beauty lured in vain;
Though ruby lips and sparkling eyes
Were beaming bright around,
Fond faithful Memory painted her,
And smiled when others frown'd.
Again he met the gentle girl,
To win her kind heart strove,
And now a bridal ring she wears,
The pledge of changeless love.

Mrs. Valentine Roberts.

THE STORY-TELLER.

COOMBE LACY.

By the Author of "Peers and Protegées," "Changes and Chances," &c.

Chapter I.

"That makes the third!" exclaimed Miss Lydia Macintosh, taking off her spectacles, and laying them deliberately down on the paper she had been reading. "There are no fewer than three cases of child murder in this very newspaper! What is the world coming to? People talk of education, but for my part, I think there never was so much crime committed as at the present day; for children are not half so well cared for now as they used to be when bound out as parish apprentices. 'Tis true they were sometimes badly treated, and driven to run away; and occasionally the farmers got an ill-disposed unmanageable boy, but those instances were rare; and, on the whole, I'm sure the law worked well, and in my opinion it is a pity it should be abolished. "Let me see," continued the musing lady, still following the subject in her thoughts, "I can remember seven apprentices whilst we lived at The Barton—boys and girls included—and every one of them turned out well, except that wild imp of mischief, Bob Bartlett, which is wonderful, considering what a dishonest wretch the bailiff was; but Bob was up to as many falsehoods, dodges, and sly tricks as a London thief, and only escaped summary punishment by going to sea. Bob had an inordinate desire for money, and used to set springs for game, and steal the fowls or anything else he could make a market of; but he was kind to the horses under his care, and would show more mercy to a dying hog and unfledged bird than those wretched women display towards their own offspring."

The clock striking nine roused her from these and similar meditations, and, rising, she laid aside the newspaper, and placed a Bible on the table in its stead. Scarcely had she resumed her seat, when the door opened, and a man and woman entered and took possession of the two nearest chairs, according to long established custom.

When the religious service was ended, Cicely left the room to lock and bolt the doors and windows for the night; whilst her husband remained to give his mistress the expected account of the day's proceedings.

"Us ha vinished ploughing the drea-acre vield, mum, an' turned the sheep inta the grattens ta yeat down the turmits; hoigh toime, too, or there ud be none a-leaved, the oomen an' children comes and picks 'em as soon as hever my back's a-turned. I'm out o' all payshuns wi' 'em."

This his mistress knew was a sore subject to Richard, so she said lightly, "Never mind, Richard; two or three bundles of turnip greens won't be found wanting by the sheep, and may make them, poor souls, a few pence or a hearty meal. But can we have the threshing-machine this week?"

"'Ees, shure, mum. Varmer Smith said as how one day was just so good as another ta him, an' if so be you'd loike the rick drashed out to-morrow morning, why so should be; the men could bring the machine on to him, an' go ta Varmer Browning's arterwards; he'd undertake ta 'quaint 'em wi' it, and tell 'em to come 'arly."

A few more words passed, and Richard quitted the apartment. Miss Macintosh took the macassars from the sofa, shook, folded, and laid them neatly aside with some of the other ornamental articles about the tables, in order that the room might be ready for Cicely's broom; then lighting her night candle, and carefully extinguishing the mould, she proceeded slowly to bed, still deploring the increasing depravity of the nineteenth century.

Miss Lydia Macintosh—for by some strange chance she was always addressed and spoken of with the prefix of her Christian name—was somewhat above fifty years of age, and belonged to that often despised, frequently eccentric, but very numerous class of the population of Great Britain, commonly called old maids. Her father died whilst she was yet an infant, and Mrs. Macintosh, after the first overwhelming rush of grief at losing the kind and noble-hearted husband of her youth, had subsided into a calm and Christian resignation, decided on still keeping on The Barton, and farming it with the aid of a steward or bailiff.

Mr. Macintosh had died suddenly from a fall whilst hunting, and being one of the thoughtless, good-natured sort of persons who live for the present time and let the future take care of itself, had made no settlement on his wife at the time of his marriage, and left no document behind him that would secure his property to his widow and child, or authorise any friend to interfere in their behalf. Therefore, when the neighbours saw the estate neglected and badly cultivated, and suspected fraudulent transactions on the part of the bailiff—subjects that were openly talked of at their own tables after a long day's run with the hounds, or at the corn market in the adjacent town, where Mrs. Macintosh's steward invariably undersold them—none of the gentlemen liked boldly to come forward and tax him with unfair dealing, or to take the responsibility of privately informing Mrs. Macintosh that he was unfaithful to his trust.

So years passed on; matters at The Barton grew worse and worse; the land was impoverished, the homestead and out-buildings in a miserably dilapidated state, when suddenly the bailiff was nowhere to be found. Mrs. Macintosh, who, with her daughter, by this time about five and twenty years of age, was staying with some friends in the north of England, was, after some delay, apprised of his disappearance, and measures were taken for his capture. But the dishonest fellow had timed his opportunity and laid his plans so well, that he got clear off to another part of the globe with a very handsome fortune at his disposal.

Then the clergyman of the parish and several gentlemen called to sympathise with the plundered family, and to recommend proper persons to investigate and superintend their affairs; but Mrs. Macintosh declined accepting such tardy advice and manifestations of regretful sorrow for what had occurred, because either of the persons now proffering their assistance might, by a few timely words, have averted the evil he deplored.

Mr. Templeton, the rector, however, was an exception to the rest, and, after the others were gone, she confided to his ear a little communication which, for the present, was to be kept a secret, and the secret was, that Lydia, in her recent visit, had accepted an offer of marriage from Mr. Bowring, a young solicitor, with whom she had been long acquainted. He was shortly expected, and would doubtless do the best in his power to extricate them from their difficulties and put matters straight.

The worthy rector agreed with her in thinking, under existing circumstances, Mr. Bowring was the very best person to be entrusted with her affairs, and he returned to the rectory pleased with the knowledge that his friends were in safe hands now, and would soon be removed from the scene of their trouble, and spared suffering that reverse of fortune, which, from what he had heard, was suspended over their heads.

Truthfully and minutely, so far as her knowledge went, did Lydia Macintosh inform her lover of their past losses, and present uncertain and painful position, and Mr. Bowring lost no time in obeying her wishes that he would come and help them with his judgment and experience. But his presence did not bring the anticipated consolation and relief—far from it; for it added another cause of anxiety infinitely harder to bear than all the rest. She reproved her heart for the thought, called herself exacting, suspicious, and distrustful, but in vain; she felt that her lover's manner was changed towards her, and the days as they passed strengthened that conviction.

To her mother's eye his demeanour was unaltered; yea, even up to the evening before he left them; for he announced the sudden and dangerous illness of a near relation as a reason for his abrupt departure. Had she witnessed his parting with the poor weeping Lydia, weeping in spite of her womanly pride and previous determination to conceal her wounded affections and blighted hopes, she would have been better prepared for the letter in which Mr. Bowring, some week or so after, formally and coldly declined having anything to do with their affairs, recommended them to apply to some professional man in the vicinity, and intimated in the most delicate yet unmistakeable language that the friendship between them must be considered at an end, as the cares and duties of his profession left him no time to devote to any but the members of his own family.

Such was the manner in which the fortune-hunting young solicitor broke off his engagement with Lydia, and congratulated himself on the cold caution and worldly wisdom he had displayed throughout their intercourse by the guarded behaviour he had observed towards her, when in the presence of a third party, and the consummate skill with which he had avoided committing himself in the few epistolary communications that had passed between them.

It has been said troubles never come alone, and the widow and her daughter could bear ample testimony to the truth of that assertion; for the distemper broke out among the sheep and was fatal to half the flock, whilst several

yearlings and milch cows were also carried off by murrain. Mrs. Macintosh's health gave way under such repeated trials; indeed her mind and body both were weakened to such a degree that she felt unequal to any exertion, so that Lydia was obliged to smother her own grief, and give her undivided attention to the business details that Mr. Templeton's lawyer laid before her. Poor girl, she felt as if youth and hope were completely crushed out of her heart by Mr. Bowring's letter; so that it scarcely gave her an additional pang to hear that The Barton, with all the live stock and agricultural implements upon it, must be sold to liquidate the debts which Mrs. Macintosh's unjust steward had incurred in her name.

But when the fine estate, belonging to her father's family for many generations, had really passed into the hands of the lord of the manor, and she and her mother by courtesy were suffered to occupy the house until they could suit themselves with another residence—when from an ivy covered window she looked down on the foal yard on the day of sale, and saw the animals she had long been accustomed to, and called her own, driven away by their respective purchasers—a keen sense of poverty and desolation came over her, as she put her arms round her mother's neck and wept long and bitterly upon her bosom.

"There, those are the last tears I intend shedding!" she exclaimed at last, raising her head and dashing off the few remaining drops that hung upon her face. "It is quite time we should think upon what we are to do. Mother, have you any idea or wish upon the subject?"

"We will do what Mr. Templeton thinks best," replied Mrs. Macintosh. "I only desire that we may not be separated."

"Separated!" said Lydia, "of course not. What could put such a notion into your mind?"

"Why," said her mother, "because people seem to say that in our very reduced circumstances the only plan will be for you to go out as a governess, whilst I try to get into some small lodging where the woman would not be above attending on me."

"Was this Mr. Templeton's suggestion?" asked Lydia.

"No," replied her mother; "the ladies who called here yesterday proposed it—Mrs. Crompton and her daughters, the Griffiths and Pomeroys."

"Oh, by the way, what did they call for, when they have allowed so many weeks to pass since our return without seeming to remember that we were once on terms of the closest intimacy?" said Lydia.

"I believe they had an impression the furniture was to be disposed of," replied Mrs. Macintosh; "and in that case there were several things they wished to have—your work-table, the book-cases, and the glass dessert set."

"I dare say," responded Lydia, bitterly. "But did either of them offer to receive me as a governess, or only propose that I should become one?"

"Oh, they thought it was the best thing you could do," said her mother, "and promised to recommend you if they heard of any situation likely to suit. But, as I told them, I should prefer your keeping a little school, for then we should still be together, and I might be of some use in household matters."

Lydia was busy with her own thoughts, and made no reply. Mrs. Macintosh, mistaking the cause of her silence, continued in a sad, deprecating tone, "You don't think I should, my dear? Well, perhaps not. God knows my heart. I have always tried to do my best, and studied your interest; but it has been a miserable failure; for in spite of all my good intentions and designs, I have brought upon you nothing but trouble and disgrace."

Lydia sprung up and knelt at her feet, whilst she took her hands, and tenderly caressing them, said, "Not disgrace, dear mother—that has never touched us yet. And do not blame yourself for what has happened; wiser heads than yours might have been deceived by the plausibility of that horrid man, the consequence of whose frauds I should care very little about, could I once more see you in health and spirits, as you were a year ago."

"Can I believe you, Lydia?" asked Mrs. Macintosh, incredulously, as she eagerly gazed into her daughter's face.

"Is it possible that you have ever doubted it, mother?" returned Lydia, in evident surprise, whilst an expression of earnest truthfulness shone in her eyes as she continued—"Most deeply and sincerely should I grieve, mother, if I had ever by word or deed caused an impression to the contrary to arise in your mind——"

"You never have," interrupted Mrs. Macintosh, quickly, as she kissed her daughter's brow. "I do not deny that such an idea has obtained entrance into my mind; but it was through no fault of yours."

"Then dislodge it instantly, dearest mother," said Lydia, rising, "and never again give admission to a thought that does dishonour to us both, and would eventually alienate our affections from each other; whereas, the events that you deplore have had precisely the contrary effect; for I have often thought I could not have survived those waves of trouble, if I had not had a mother to live for and to love me."

After this conversation Mrs. Macintosh grew better daily, but she left all business arrangements to her daughter, and listened with great interest to Lydia's somewhat visionary and varied schemes for laying out to the best advantage the five hundred pounds, which was all that remained to them of their once large property.

The kind rector was a constant visitor, and one day he said, "Well, my friends, I hope you are getting into smoother water. Green, the lawyer, tells me that your affairs are all settled at last, though at an enormous sacrifice. Still, in some cases, it is a relief to know the worst, and I really think Mrs. Macintosh is improving in looks already. I wish I could say the same for her daughter."

"Poor Lydia has had more to endure," replied the widow, following with tearful eyes the movements of her child, who turned to the window to conceal her face from the sympathising observation of the good clergyman.

"Yes," said he, walking to her side, and taking her hand, "she has been early called upon to experience that riches make to themselves wings, and fly away, and that no trust is to be placed in princes or any child of man; but dear child, this affliction will not have done the work for which it was sent unless it leads you to seek the true riches, and put your trust in Him alone who has promised that all things shall work together for good to them that love Him."

"I trust it has done so in some measure," replied Lydia, humbly; "but it seemed hard at first, at my young age, to be called upon to prove that all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

"That is the very same conclusion that Solomon arrived at," said the rector, "after he had found how fruitless were all his attempts to find happiness in this world's mirth, pleasures, labours, works, wealth, or wisdom; and to the same conviction all must sooner or later come, who rest all their hopes and joys upon the shifting sands of this uncertain life."

Neither of the ladies seemed inclined to make any reply; so, after a few minutes silence, he proceeded:

"Pain and grief, afflictions and disappointments, are the lot of all," said he; "at least, I have never met with any who have escaped them; and I do not think it is the will of Providence, who has placed us here in a state of trial and probation, that we shall escape them. It should be enough for us to know that our most minute affairs are governed and regulated by His power. His watchful eye is ever on His creatures, His ear open to their prayers. Now to reply more immediately to your remark. Of course, He is the best judge of the proper time to send affliction to us, for He best knows when such chastening is likely to make the most impression on our stubborn hearts; but we always find that children who have been judiciously restrained and corrected in youth, grow up into the most estimable men and women, make the most valuable members of society, and the best heads of families. But now, my dear," he continued, leading Lydia to the sofa beside her mother, and drawing a chair for himself in front of them, "let me hear your plans, if you have formed any; as an old friend and pastor I may ask that much, may I not?"

"I should think you might indeed," said Lydia; "and in truth I should have submitted them to you before, if they had not been so crude and impracticable. The other day when I went into Rockhampton I noticed how very feeble the old post-mistress had become, and saw also that her apartments were to be let. An idea came into my head that if we took them, I might give her some assistance in sorting the letters, make myself acquainted with the routine of the office, and eventually, through living in the house, and making interest among our friends, we might obtain the situation at Mrs. Sufton's death."

Mr. Templeton shook his head, and replied, "Mrs. Sufton's lodgings are well furnished, and fetch a high price, and the whole of your money would be swallowed up by the time you had lived there six or eight years."

"I thought of that, too," interrupted Lydia; "but she does not appear to me likely to live half that time."

"I don't know that," he responded; "for she comes from a long-lived family, and there's an old though somewhat coarse saying that those who wait for dead peoples' shoes are pretty sure to go barefoot; but perhaps you intended eking out your means by tuition?"

"No," replied Lydia. "I decided against teaching 'the young idea how to shoot,' from the first; for if my pupils were at all precocious, or possessed arithmetical talent, they would soon go out of my depth. You may laugh, but I assure you it is no easy matter for me to cast up a line of figures. I dot them up and down three or four times, and am by no means certain at last that my computation is correct. History and geography, too, is dangerous ground for me; I never venture on either if I can avoid it."

"Just what I have long suspected," said Mr. Templeton, gravely. "The really solid and essential branches of an English education are slighted and slurred over, in order that the pupils shall have more time to give to music, languages, and such accomplishments as will enable them to shine in society. But a knowledge of arithmetic is of the utmost importance to the mistress of a household, who should be fully competent to audit her servants' and tradesmen's bills. How else can she protect herself from fraud, and her husband be sure that his money is not misapplied. Nay, even in your own case, Lydia, I am afraid the want of this numerical organ will sadly interfere with the postal business; so suppose you let me hear the other schemes that are floating in your active brain."

"I have only one left," replied Lydia, "and I am doubtful whether you will think better of that than its forerunner. It is to open a Berlin wool shop, or Fancy Repository, as they are called in large towns. I have often made purchases in them whilst visiting my friends, and invariably wished there was one in Rockhampton on my return, little surmising that it would ever be my lot to supply the wants of the neighbourhood with purse-silk, knitting-cotton, and wools for embroidery."

"Are you quite sure," asked Mr. Templeton, "that the demand for those articles will be large enough to render it a profitable undertaking?"

"Oh, yes," said Lydia, "I should not think there was a doubt upon that matter, there are so many genteel families round us. Three young ladies at Coombe Lacy, and the Hiltons, Burnets, Cromptons, Griffiths, Pomeroys, and Middletons, who must spend a great deal on their wax flowers, besides your daughters——"

"Leave them out of your reckoning, I pray," said the rector, eagerly. "What with home duties"—he was a widower—"and parish ministrations, they have no time for embroidery and fancy work. The profit on their custom would not be enough to put sugar in your tea. Besides, how about the multiplication table?"

Lydia returned his smile, though faintly, as she answered, "I thought on that, too, and determined to be a little wiser in that, as well as other things, before a twelvemonth has gone over my head; but since you discountenance all my schemes, can you devise any better plan?"

"That is as Mrs. Macintosh and you may determine," said Mr. Templeton; "but I must first premise that I should be very sorry if my old friends left the parish; and, in order to prevent the necessity of their doing so, I have bestowed much thought and consideration upon the subject. Now mark the result. Last week Gregory Styles died, so the pretty Willow Cottage, with

its twenty or thirty acres of land, fell into Sir Norman Latham's hand, and it seems to me just the very thing to suit you. The little property you have is amply enough to stock so small a farm, and honest Richard Armstrong, who managed it during the long illness of its late owner, would be quite equal to do all that you would require of him, especially if you would turn your attention to agriculture; read some works on the subject, and get a practical knowledge of it. His wife is famed for her butter and poultry, and could sell twice as much as she carries to market every week of her life. Besides, it would be conferring a vast amount of happiness upon this active trustworthy young couple to let them live on in the cottage, for they were both orphans bound to old Styles by the parish when they were mere children; and their grief at having to leave the spot and take fresh service is excessive. Now what do you say to my proposal?"

Lydia and her mother exchanged looks; there was no mistaking the expression of their countenances.

"You would like it, mother, I see; and I'm sure I should, exceedingly," said Lydia. "Oh, Mr. Templeton, how very, very kind to feel so much interest in us!"

"But will Sir Norman really let us be his tenants? May he not have promised the cottage to some one else?" asked Mrs. Macintosh, grasping the rector's hand. "Nay, now I think of it, there was some talk of its being taken down when Gregory Styles's lease was out, and the land portioned out amongst the adjoining farms. Yes, I certainly heard the late steward say so."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Templeton. "I was not aware there was any project of that sort in contemplation, or I would have questioned Mr. Maunder, the new steward, before I broached the matter to you. Stay, the family arrived from Paris yesterday. I'll ride over to Coombe Lacy, and have an interview with the baronet."

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Sir Norman Latham, the lord of the manor and the owner of the beautiful seat that bore the name of Coombe Lacy, was descended from a long line of ancestors that could be traced back in unbroken succession to the valiant Sir Brian Latham, who came over in the suite of William the Conqueror; and if that gallant knight could have seen the present head of his noble house, he would have been satisfied that its honours were in safe keeping.

Sir Norman was in the decline of life, but his tall figure was as erect, his eagle eye as bright, his intellects as clear as they had been in his youth. His dark complexion glowed with health and exercise, and his lofty forehead received additional height because his hair had receded from the top of his head and hung in a silvery mass over the collar of his coat. From having married late, his children, four in number, were still under fifteen years of age; the eldest a son—named after his renowned ancestor—was all a parent's heart could wish, and the three girls gave promise of great beauty and amiability.

The baronet had just heard from Mr. Maunder the details of Mrs. Macintosh's reverse of fortune through the fraud and flight of her bailiff, and his indignation at the base conduct of the scoundrel was at its height, when the new steward, with the view of allaying the storm he had unwittingly raised, proceeded to relate the advantageous terms on which he, in virtue of his office, had purchased The Barton; in consequence of his having so much ready money in hand, and the peremptory nature of the sale. Exulting in the knowledge that he had bought the estate for several hundreds less than its actual value, Mr. Maunder talked on at a great rate, eulogising its good points, remarking on its capabilities, and declaring it was worth more by twice over to the baronet than to any other person, as now all the Latham property in that county lay within a ring fence.

Never in his whole existence had Sir Norman Latham, baronet of Coombe Lacy, exercised a greater restraint on his temper than whilst sitting for that half hour at his library-table opposite his self-gratulatory and unconscious steward; who, with his eyes fixed on the draught, was running his fore-finger over the boundary line of the different farms, perfectly oblivious to the fact that the baronet's lips were compressed as if by a mighty effort, and his eyes gleaming like coals of fire upon him.

"Mr. Maunder!" at last said the baronet, in a voice that made his hearer start from the chair as if he had received the full shock of a galvanic battery, "Mr. Maunder, if you wish to remain in my service, this must be the last good bargain you ever make for me. Good bargain, forsooth! I call it little better than a robbery—defrauding the widow and child of their lawful inheritance, taking a mean, dishonourable advantage of the distressing position in which they were placed! I am too surprised and indignant at such a transaction taking place in my name, or under sanction of my authority, that I have no words at command to express my sentiments. But go directly; engage some competent experienced person to survey the estate, and let me know the full extent of its value. And from henceforth, Mr. Maunder, 'judge righteous judgment;' do your duty between man and man."

It was the first and last time the steward ever saw Sir Norman in a passion, and to the day of his death he never forgot it, or the lesson he then received.

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Mrs. Macintosh and her daughter were taking their coffee, when Mr. Templeton entered the room unannounced; for he could find no one to perform that office for him.

"You are the bearer of good tidings, I can see by your face; nobody can mistake the pleased expression that rests upon it," said Lydia, rising from her seat, and advancing to meet him in the excess of her satisfaction.

"Yes, I have not only prospered in my mission," he replied, "but had a very gratifying account of my son Godfrey. Sir Norman saw him in passing through Oxford, and says he is looking well, though studying hard, and likely to graduate with great credit. Godfrey was always a favourite with the baronet, who, in consequence, dwelt somewhat largely upon the subject, which induced me to stay lunch; then I fell into the company of the young ladies—the governess is spending the vacation with her friends—who beguiled the time so agreeably that I had no idea how the afternoon had waned, until by consulting my watch I found it was past the rectory dinner hour. A Coombe Lacy luncheon, however, is a very good substitute, and if you will let me join your repast I shall not feel that I have had one meal less than usual in the course of the day. Stay, Lydia; where are you going?"

"Only for a cup and saucer," she replied. "I shall be back in a minute;" and whilst she returned with those articles, and placed a very tempting looking ham before him, Mrs. Macintosh explained that their servants had left, and the charwoman who now rendered her services had gone on an errand to Rockhampton. He then handed her a note from the baronet, which ran as follows:—

"Sir Norman Latham's compliments to Mrs. Macintosh, and begs to assure her that he shall be happy to receive her as a tenant for Willow Cottage, or The Barton, should she be in a position to farm so large an estate, and wish to remain in the house to which she has been accustomed. He proposes to call and hear her decision in the ensuing week, and will fix Thursday if agreeable to Mrs. Macintosh."

"You must have pleaded our cause most ably to induce the baronet to write such a note as that," she said, handing it over to her daughter to peruse; "and I really cannot sufficiently thank you for your kindness; for the more I think on the plan you suggested, the more feasible and desirable it appears."

"Then you choose the cottage in preference to The Barton," said Mr. Templeton, taking up his knife and fork, and preparing to do justice to the viands before him.

"Oh yes," said Mrs. Macintosh; "we should not have a quarter enough money to stock The Barton, and farm it properly; and even if we had, my determination would be the same, for I have often wished the estate had been sold at my husband's death, as I am sure we should have been thousands of pounds better off."

"I quite agree with you," said Mr. Templeton; "but regretting the past will not mend it. The only way is to remember the rocks we have split on, and avoid them in our future course. Lydia," said he, "I cannot praise the ham too highly; but the butter does not look inviting, and the coffee is the worst I ever tasted here; and that milk is a shocking apology for cream."

"I acknowledge it," said Lydia; "and yet we are obliged to send into the village for it, and count it a favour to be supplied, as the people do not keep a public dairy. The butter mother declines eating. I am only sorry we have none better to offer you."

"Ah!" said Mr. Templeton, "your cows went a fortnight since, didn't they? So you have none, and I have too many. I'll make you a present of Golden Cup—that's the pretty gentle Guernsey that Lydia admires so much. She has just had a calf, which promises to be as good and handsome as herself. Robin shall bring them down by-and-bye; and I think you had better let him sleep here as long as you remain. It is a large house for only three women to live in."

They did not tell him that the charwoman went home to her family every night, and that Mrs. Macintosh was often so nervous, that she could not sleep a wink if the dog barked, or any noise was heard in the vicinity of the house. It was a matter of doubt to Lydia which her mother appreciated most highly, Golden Cup's cream, or Robin's protection.

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Sir Norman came on the appointed day. If Mrs. Macintosh and her daughter had been the highest ladies in the land, his behaviour could not have been more courteous and affable. He entered into all Mrs. Macintosh's views respecting the cottage, gave her the option of being a yearly tenant, or taking it for a term of seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years, as she felt disposed, and volunteered to have it put in thorough repair, and made ready for her early occupation. Finally, on taking his departure he intimated that some mistake had been made in the transfer of the estate, through which he found himself her debtor for one thousand pounds. He had placed that sum to her credit in the Rockhampton bank, and her cheques to that amount would be honoured.

Chapter II.

Twenty years had elapsed between the date of the preceding events and the evening on which Miss Lydia Macintosh was introduced to the reader at the commencement of the tale; all that time, so long in anticipation, so short in retrospection, had been spent by her at Willow Cottage in quiet, unchangeful happiness up to the year before. She was too perfectly contented with her lot to heave one sigh at the remembrance of Mr. Bowring and her early disappointment, and daily offered up her praises and thanksgivings to that Power who had chosen her inheritance, and permitted her "lines to fall in pleasant places."

Mrs. Macintosh had gone to her long home the previous autumn, and the winter had in consequence been dull and lonely. Lydia's friends took compassion on her forlorn condition, and came for a few days' visit to cheer her up; but they had homes and families to attend to, therefore she passed many a solitary day listening to the rain beating against the windows, and gazing with brimming eyes upon the vacant chair, or at the long-bending branches of the trees as the wind whirled them about in its fury.

Death, that had desolated her own hearth, had also despoiled the houses of others. Kind Mr. Templeton was sleeping his last sleep in the sacred edifice where he had so many years exhorted the sinner to repentance and preached forgiveness of sins. Sir Norman Latham lay at rest near by, and many a tombstone and many a mound in the spacious churchyard bore evidence that young and old, rich and poor, had passed from time into eternity.

Nor was it death or time only that had effected all the changes that had occurred in the neighbourhood. Hymen had been exceedingly busy, transplanting some of the fairest human flowers into far distant homes, and bringing others back to fill the empty spaces. All Mr. Templeton's daughters had married clergyman of adjoining parishes, Godfrey was established at the

rectory, as earnest and eloquent in the pulpit as indefatigable in his parish labours, as his father had ever been. Sir Norman never found reason to retract the good opinion he had early formed of him, and was particularly well pleased when his second daughter, Beatrice, was established as the wife of the young man, who, at the time, had only a small curacy to take her to. Mabel, the youngest of the family, was on the same day united to Lord Carisbrook, who bore her off in triumph to grace his ancestral halls in a distant county. The eldest Miss Latham remained single until a twelvemonth after the baronet's death, when she gave her hand and heart to Captain Hamilton, and immediately accompanied him to India, where his regiment was ordered out on active service; and, within a few weeks of her departure, Sir Brian, the present baronet, brought the young and lovely Lady Eleanor Percival, a blushing timid bride, to Coombe Lacy.

This was some years ago, and the sound of children's merry laughter and clear blithsome voices echoed once more through the lofty corridors of the splendid old mansion and in the picturesque grounds of the rectory. Now, however, they were unusually quiet, for intelligence had just been received of the death of Mr. Rowland Templeton, a brother of Godfrey's. He was a lieutenant in the Honourable East India Company's Service, and an universal favourite, especially with the children, for he was always full of fun and frolic, and enjoyed flying a kite and a game of hunt the slipper as much as any of them. Poor little things! The loss of Uncle Rowland, as they all called him, was their first grief, and it may be doubted whether any sorrow in after life was more acutely felt than that—for the time it lasted. But the elastic spirits of childhood soon rebounded, their joyous tones again rang forth long before the rector's face regained its cheerful serene expression. Indeed, a gloom seemed to pervade the countenances of all, for the details of the case were very melancholy.

The *Delawar*, a fine East Indiaman of the largest build, sailed from Calcutta with a heavy cargo and full complement of passengers, but the ship had not made one-third of her voyage before she encountered some terrific gales, one of her masts was broken, and great fears were entertained for her safety. Lieutenant Templeton was hurled into the raging waves just as he had successfully performed some necessary but dangerous action that gave relief to the straining ship. All knew the peril of the undertaking, but he alone was brave enough to accomplish it by the voluntary sacrifice of his own life. Nor was that the last storm the ill-fated ship had to contend with, for a long spell of foul weather and contrary winds followed, so that it was found requisite to throw much of the cargo overboard.

Scarcely had the fury of the elements subsided, and the worn and weary-hearted crew begun to breathe freely, when it was whispered that typhus fever had broken out in its most virulent form. Day by day the whispers grew louder, until all attempts to conceal the direful calamity was abandoned, and fear or despair took possession of every mind.

The doctor was amongst its first victims; and as the heat was excessive, the air below deck close and fetid, the disease made frightful progress. It was fatal to the captain, and several of the chief officers in command, as well as to nearly one-half of the passengers and seamen. And those who had escaped attack, or had stamina enough to live through it, were so reduced by their long and trying voyage, and the want of proper nutriment, that they were in a most pitiable condition when put in quarantine on reaching England.

* * * * * *

The sun shone brightly into the bedroom window, and induced Miss Lydia Macintosh to get up rather earlier than usual—though she was always an early riser—on the morning on which the rick was to be thrashed; and having dusted some handsome China ornaments on the mantelpiece and chiffonnier, too delicate for Cicely's rough handling, she gave the fire a stir, and throwing on a shawl—for the air was cold and frosty—passed out into the garden.

Miss Lydia was very proud of that part of her domain, and in summer it was one mass of blossoms and sweet odours; even then the profusion of hepatica, crocuses, and snowdrops, gave it a bright cheerful appearance. She gathered some scarlet bloom from the Pyrus Japonica that clustered round the porch, and proceeded slowly down the gravel walk, plucking flowers as she went. The ground sloped gradually to a little shallow stream, whose clear water rippled over the stones and laved the roots of the beautiful row of willows that stretched their graceful branches over it. In addition to the trees, there was a high hedge of evergreens, and a substantial rustic gate. A bridge of corresponding structure spanned the stream, and communicated with the village green, which was a piece of waste land of considerable extent, dotted over with elms of surpassing height and beauty. Cottages, inhabited by the poor, clustered thickly on the opposite side; the church, with its enlarged burial ground, occupied the west; and farther off, on the east, were flour-mills, a factory, and the road to Rockhampton. The ivied gable end of the rectory peeped out between the dark yew trees in the cemetery, and the magnificent woods of Coombe Lacy formed a fitting background for the tall grey spire and the golden vane that quivered in the sunbeams.

Miss Lydia went on deliberately with her employment until she neared the gate, when, raising her eyes from her bouquet, she espied a strange object in the path. It was nothing less than a hamper, of large dimensions, which had been placed just inside the barrier. She advanced with accelerated pace, taking note of its form and size as she approached. Yes, it was a coarse-covered hamper, with a piece of writing-paper somewhat soiled and crumpled, and folded in imitation of a card, fixed clumsily upon it. And it bore her name, too, "Miss Lydia Macintosh." There was no mistaking it, though the letters might have been formed by any ploughman with a burnt skewer. Altogether, it was a very mysterious-looking object in the lady's opinion, and she walked round and round it at a safe distance, when, taking courage, she finally knelt down and applied her eye to one of the large apertures in the cover. From this inspection she was roused by a familiar voice; and starting to her feet, she ran to the gate, calling out, "Mr. Galen, Mr. Galen! come here for a minute, pray. That is," she added, "if you are not in a hurry and particularly wanted elsewhere."

"No; my hurry's over," said the doctor, hitching up his nag to the end of the bridge; "and the jocular host of the 'Magpie and Spoon,' who on the birth of his first-born facetiously remarked he had better than a dozen, may now use the expression in its fullest sense, for I have just ushered a pair of fine healthy children into the world, which makes his number thirteen."

"Twins! Bless my heart!" said Miss Lydia, casting a furtive glance over her shoulder at the hamper. "It appears to me there are a vast multitude of babies in the world."

"Very likely," responded the doctor, assentingly, "and we are not badly off in this little nook; thirteen at the 'Magpie,' and ten at the baker's next door. But you are not looking well this morning, Miss Lydia," he continued, in an altered voice and glance of inquiry.

"I was perfectly so when I arose," she replied; "but the sight of that hamper frightened me. I don't know who left it, or what it contains, but I'm terrified with the notion that it holds a baby,—it's big enough for *two!*"

In spite of the good lady's pallid face and uncontrollable agitation, the doctor gave forth such a loud "Ha, ha!" again and again repeated, that his meditative mare was roused from her reverie, and pricked up her ears in astonishment; but her amazement was nothing compared with her master's as a child's voice was heard from the hamper.

Miss Lydia caught hold of her companion's arm to save herself from falling, and whispered faintly, whilst her distended eyes were fixed upon the spot from whence the sounds, growing louder, still proceeded, "I read such horrible things in the paper last night of infants being put to—to ——"

"There's no harm done here," said the doctor, drawing her forwards; "that is no cry of pain, so don't be frightened. Now, can you support yourself whilst I give the little prisoner freedom?"

She withdrew her hand, and in another minute the cords were cut, the lid thrown open, and a small emaciated face was revealed, which ceased its sobs and returned their gaze.

"Poor little creature!" said the doctor, lifting it carefully, with all its wrappings; "I don't think I ever saw such a thin, starved, miserable object. What is to be done with it, Miss Lydia?"

"I'm sure I can't tell," she replied, as her eyes filled with tears. "Do you think it will die, Mr. Galen?"

"Depends upon the care that's taken of it," he replied; "if she had proper attention and good food, I should say she might get on very well; but if sent to the Union the chances are against her — very much against her in my opinion."

"Dear me, that would be very dreadful," said Miss Lydia, nervously twisting her fingers; "I could not, in conscience, let the poor creature die for want of care whilst I have really nothing of importance to do. But I am so ignorant of the treatment and requirements of infants that I should not know how to dress or feed it."

"The first you would soon learn," said the doctor; "the last she could do for herself if you'd put a nice piece of bread and cream into her hand; nay, I doubt not but those pretty teeth would pick a chicken bone excellently well."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Miss Lydia; "why, what age do you suppose her?"

"About three years old, I should say," he replied, removing his finger from her mouth.

"But children of that age can run about and talk," said Miss Lydia.

"Not always," said the doctor; "some are backward with their tongue, others weak on their feet; but this one is evidently still under the effects of a soporific, for she is fast asleep again."

"Carry her in then, and lay her on the sofa," said Miss Lydia; "I'll follow as soon as I have seen Richard turn out the hamper, and convinced myself by ocular demonstration that it contains nothing that will explain the mystery."

"Only hay!" said Miss Lydia, as she entered the parlour some few minutes later, "soft and sweet as hay can be, but nothing else, not even a note; perhaps there is one pinned to her clothes?"

"No, there isn't, for I have already examined," said the doctor; "she has on a little night-dress, with a small hole cut out in front, where the mark was I suppose, a woman's flannel petticoat, and piece of blue serge—that's all."

"Dear me," said Miss Lydia, sinking into a chair, overcome with excitement and perplexity, "this really is a most untoward and disagreeable affair, and what astonishes me more than anything else is that the audacious woman should consign her unfortunate offspring to me—to me, whose existence is scarcely known half-a-dozen miles off! She must belong to the neighbourhood, Mr. Galen?"

"That idea struck me also, Miss Lydia," he replied; "and I have been taking a retrospective glance over the last few years in hopes of remembering something that would enable me to identify her, but I cannot get hold of the slightest clue. Perhaps the mother is living in service, and cannot take care of the child herself, or afford to pay any one else for keeping it. No doubt," continued the doctor, smiling archly, "she knew you were in easy circumstances, and had a kind heart with no object to lavish its affections upon."

"There, there that's enough," said Miss Lydia, smiling also, as she rose to ring the bell. "Anybody would think she had bribed you, Mr. Galen, to plead her cause, you do it so ably. It looks very suspicious, too, that you should be on the spot at the exact time; but I don't see why we mayn't have breakfast; the coffee and bacon must be ready now, and Richard has taken your mare to the stable."

As Cicely placed the tempting rashers and fried potatoes on the table she cast a quick furtive glance towards the interloper; but the little wan pinched face excited her compassion, and her eyes rested pityingly upon it as she left the room.

Miss Lydia observed the changed expression of her servant's countenance, and poured out the coffee with a lightened heart; any one who has a tried, trusted, and valued domestic will know exactly what her feelings were. Cicely was an excellent creature, active, honest, industrious; but she did not like

innovations; everything must go on in the same uniform jog trot way, or she would give very manifest tokens of her displeasure. The dairy and household work occupied her fully, and Miss Lydia had thought with consternation of the additional trouble this new comer would occasion. True, a nurse girl could be hired, but that would only aggravate the evil, bringing, in Cicely's language, two plagues instead of one into the house.

That compassionating look, however, told Miss Lydia there would be no opposition from that quarter, so she listened with painful interest to the account of Lieutenant Templeton's death, and the dreadful ravages the fever had made on board the *Delawar*, the particulars of which Mr. Galen had heard from Sir Brian, who had just returned from a visit he had made to the unfortunate ship.

The doctor said he was at Coombe Lacy the day before to vaccinate the baby, and thought the baronet appeared depressed and abstracted; at first he was afraid there was something amiss with Lady Eleanor; but Sir Brian seemed to divine the motive of his inquiry, and communicated to him a part of what he had seen and heard.

The baronet was a man of strong feelings, and possessed great affection for his family; the attachment between him and his eldest sister was peculiarly great, and their parting was a bitter trial to both. Since that he had had a wife and three children to love, but his heart was large enough for all, and Mrs. Hamilton filled her old place in it.

Mrs. Templeton's family numbered twice as many, and she from a slight fairy-like girl had changed into a stout, portly matron; of course there was no interchange of visits between the ladies of the park and rectory and the occupant of Willow Cottage; but when they met in the lanes or on the green, they were sure to stop and make some pleasant or appropriate remarks to Miss Lydia.

A stir in the direction of the sofa now attracted their attention, and they saw the little girl had shuffled out of her wrappings and was tottering unsteadily towards them.

"Aig! Aig!" she cried, pointing to the eggs and holding out her arms to be taken up.

Miss Lydia smiled encouragingly upon her, and lifting her on her lap fed her from the egg she had broken for herself. The first spoonful the little thing took with avidity; one more, and then her appetite seemed gone, for she turned loathingly from it, and sunk wearily against the supporting arm.

"She can't be sent to the Union in this state, that is certain," said Miss Lydia, "and I am afraid your medicine and my nursing will not be sufficient to keep her alive. But try your skill, my good friend, do; for I should not like to lose her now—poor dear! poor dear!"

"Very well, I'll do my best," said the doctor. "Now hand her over to me whilst you see that a hot bath is got ready, and a bed made nice and warm, that we can pop her into immediately. When she is in it I will leave her to your care; but you may expect me in the evening, when I shall bring some clothes for her. Our Trotty is about the same size, and Mrs. Galen, I'm sure, will be happy to supply you with everything you will require."

(To be continued.)

FAIR MAIDEN, WOULDST THOU LEARN THE SPELL?

Fair maiden! wouldst thou seek to learn
Why, captive 'neath thy sweet control,
My thoughts to thee their magnet turn,
True as the needle to the Pole.

'Tis not the beaming glance I seek
From eyes which mirror my delight,
Nor love's faint blush upon thy cheek,
Blending the rose with lily white.

'Tis not by these, tho' great their power,
You have enslaved my willing heart;
Fleeting as sunshine of an hour,
They last awhile, and then depart.

No, dearer far, thy truth's the spell,
And purity of thought will give;
With thee 'twere happiness to dwell,
And without thee I cannot live.

PENNA.

FORTUNE-SEEKING AND FORTUNE-HATING.

"And so, Maurice, you think to convince me that this forthcoming visit of Miss Egerton's is of no unusual interest to you. Pshaw! man, for once be candid, and confess the plans for besieging the fair lady, and her fairer fortune, are already matured in that cool head of yours."

The speaker, a little slender, young man, pushed away a mass of short, auburn curls from a forehead fair almost as a girl's, and bent his laughing blue eyes curiously upon his companion. He whom he addressed raised himself from his stooping posture above a workbench, littered with tiny wheels and bands, and screws, and the other appearance of a mimic machine, and shaking off the steel filings from his hand, which seemed like that of a giant beside the effeminate one of the first speaker, answered in a ringing manly voice by no means belieing the appearance of him whose massive frame was so unusually suggestive of strength and vigour.

"There'll be no convincing you about the affair, Allen; so I'll not take the trouble to argue with you. At present my thoughts are too much engrossed by this new model of mine to dwell for a moment upon Miss Egerton, or her money-bags either." And, as he finished the sentence, Maurice Skelton resumed his work, and began arranging the little wheels and bands as earnestly as if no one had spoken, or was present.

Harry Allen twisted a delicate curl of steel shaving round and round his finger in nervous embarrassment, casting uneasy glances at the busy workman, gazing, too, at his manly, vigorous form with a sort of envious consciousness of its superiority over his own delicate frame, and then coming closer to the bench, he said: "You're a queer fellow, Maurice, I'd give a trifle for a look into that scheming brain of yours. I really believe you do care more about that stupid machine than about this wonderful chance of obtaining a beautiful girl and splendid fortune, all at once. Come, tell me all about it. Leave off a minute, do, and tell me about it."

Once more the workman raised himself, and turning his flashing black eye upon the speaker, said, "Don't make a fool of yourself, Harry, and talk to me about stupid machines. What are you driving at, man? Speak out plainly."

"Well, so I will," replied the other, with a light laugh which could not hide the anxious eagerness of his words. "What I want to know is this: if you are going to enter the lists against me when Miss Egerton arrives, because if you are, I shall give it up, being well aware of your faculty for succeeding in every thing you undertake."

"Be quite at ease, then," said Maurice. "You may rest secure from any attempts of mine to win the golden prize. My ambition, at present, lies rather with iron and steel."

"But why?" persisted Harry—"you don't mean you are foolhardy enough to despise wealth, and the advantages it confers?"

"Faith, not I," laughed Maurice. "What do you suppose I tire both my brains and fingers at the wheels yonder for, but that I hope my inventive genius may bring me a snug little pile of the glittering ore? I'm a little too much like a church mouse to indulge dislike for wealth."

"Yes, that's a fact," said Harry, "you're poor enough; worse off by far than I, who have little enough; and that's why I can't understand your indifference. For my part, I frankly admit I am all alert to use every stratagem to win this charming girl, and a magnificent fortune both at once, and shall never cease to thank my aunt for this glorious opportunity. Only think how exceedingly comfortable it will be, to rest secure from the wearisome toil otherwise before us both!"

Maurice looked at Harry's glowing, excited face with a bright, self-reliant smile, and replied, "Well, Harry, if it suits you, try for it by all means, and may success attend you! But, as for me, I'd rather crush this right hand of mine in the vice yonder, than take into it, for life, the hand of a girl to whom I should be indebted for so heavy a purse. I want no money with a wife. I want a fortune which my own hard labours may win me; and, God willing, some time I'll have it."

How strong and powerful he looked, his tall form erect, his head thrown proudly back, and his eye piercing and brilliant as an eagle's! Harry Allen sighed again as he looked at him, and slowly and thoughtfully turned away from the little workshop.

Maurice Skelton and Harry Allen were half-brothers, and both orphans, residing with their wealthy aunt, Mrs. Carew. Maurice, the elder of the two, was the image of his father, who had been suddenly stricken down, in the midst of health and strength, by a fearful railroad disaster. The youthful widow was soon married a second time, and her younger son inherited her own fragile and graceful beauty, as well as a small competency at the death of his parents. Although widely different in character as well as appearance, the brothers were much attached, and had never been separated, passing through college at the same time, having both graduated a year or more ago. Neither had fully decided his future course, although Harry proposed studying for the bar, and Maurice's passion for machinery threatened, as his fashionable aunt declared, to throw away the advantages of his college education.

The great event of interest just then at the Carews' elegant country seat was the expected arrival of the charming Miss Egerton, a distant relative of Mr. Carew's, whom however he had never seen, since she had been educated in Paris, where her father died, leaving her the sole heiress of a fortune almost fabulous in its amount. On hearing of the young lady's arrival in England, Mrs. Carew, with the shrewd calculation of immediately securing the prize for one of her nephews, partly from affection for them, and partly from an innate love of manœuvering, had written a warm motherly letter, urging the lonely girl to make a long visit to them in the country. A grateful reply had been received, accepting the invitation, and adding that she should bring with her her cousin, Flora Egerton, a namesake of hers, who had hitherto been supported by her father, and still continued with her.

Anna Carew, the pretty and only daughter of Mrs. Carew, was nearly wild with excitement upon the day of the expected arrival; and although he strove to conceal it, Harry Allen was scarcely less so, and both marvelled exceedingly at the coolness and carelessness of Maurice, who wandered about in his workman's jacket, while the others, glossy and fine in their gayest attire, were on the terrace drive, watching for the long-expected arrival.

The carriage drew up at the very moment when Maurice, still in the odious jacket, (it was not so very unbecoming, after all,) was nailing up a stray climber of the vine wreathing about the pillared verandah, which stretched along the front of the house, on each side of its noble entrance. A tall, queenly form, robed in a richly-wrought travelling dress, descended languidly from the carriage, an elegant lace veil was thrown aside, revealing a fine, though rather haughty face, brilliantly lighted by a pair of dark eyes, and shaded by heavy raven braids.

"The very ideal of my dreams," thought Harry Allen, as the soft, white hand, sparkling with costly diamond rings, rested a moment in his, sending a thrill of happiness to his heart.

"A thousand welcomes, dear Miss Egerton!" cried the enthusiastic Mrs. Carew. "Nay, but I shall take you to my heart at once, and call you Florence."

"Thank you; pray do, at once," she replied. "My friends all call me Florence; and my cousin we call Flora, to distinguish her from me. Oh, I had forgotten her, where is she?"

So had all the others forgotten her, excepting Maurice. He had not yet addressed Miss Egerton; but when he perceived a little slight thing, in sober grey dress, with a bag and bundle of books in her arms, still hesitating, within the carriage, his generous heart was at once moved to avert uncomfortable feelings, and advancing at once to the door, hammer still in hand, he said, courteously, "Can I be of any assistance to you? Pray let me take those books for you, and show you the way into the house," glancing up at the doorway where the other ladies were disappearing.

A tiny snowflake of a hand, with only a plain mourning ring upon it, brushed away a shower of chesnut curls, and a pair of wondrously soft brown

eyes looked up gratefully into his face, and then glanced from the coarse jacket to the hammer, inquiringly. He smiled at the look, laid down the hammer, and held out his hand for the books, saying, "I see I must introduce myself; I am Mrs. Carew's nephew, Maurice Skelton. And you——"

Her smile in return Maurice compared afterwards to a glimmer of mingled moonbeam and starlight; and she answered, simply, "Miss Egerton is gone into the house. I am only Flora."

"'Only Flora' must permit me to exhibit her subjects in the garden to that queen, by-and-bye," said Maurice.

Another smile from the downcast face, and she disappeared within the house.

Maurice carried the hammer to the workshop, loitered about for a short time, and then, despite his assurance to Anna in the morning, that she need not look to see him there till evening, exchanged his jacket for a coat, and entered the drawing-room.

Miss Egerton, richly dressed, was there, brilliant, witty, and condescending; but as Maurice decided, after a few moments' quiet observation, too showy, and conscious of her own attractions, to please him. But she was surrounded by a delighted, admiring trio—Harry, Anna, and Mrs. Carew, who nearly overwhelmed her with attentions and caresses. She was very handsome certainly; but though Venus herself, Maurice Skelton would not allow her beauty to entice him, from the very fact that added such lustre to her charms in the opinion of the world, the golden treasures that sparkling hand could bestow. So he turned away, looking for the little brown figure of Flora. There she was, half-hidden by the window curtain, the chesnut curls bent down over a portfolio of engravings, unnoticed and uncared for. She gave a nervous start as the deep-toned voice asked pleasantly, "Have you found 'the Huguenots' yet? I think it the finest picture there."

"I was just admiring it," she timidly replied, lifting her brown eyes slyly to his, and holding up the engraving, "it is very fine."

"Pictures are always like day dreams to me," said Maurice. "I don't choose to indulge myself in the society of either very frequently."

She looked up so wonderingly that the shy eyelids forgot their duty, and he met the full liquid brightness of eyes, that, why or wherefore he knew not, sent a sudden thrill to the stout heart which had never quailed under such artillery before. Yet he recovered his self-possession in a moment, and said, "Why? your eye asks; so I'll answer candidly. Because I am too poor to afford myself such luxuries. I have to deal with plain, matter-of-fact, every day work, and do not think it wise to cultivate expensive tastes beyond my means."

Again she gave a swift, questioning glance, more eloquent than words.

"Yes, I dare say," he continued, "such an honest confession amazes you, used as you are to the gay society surrounding your brilliant cousin, yonder. 'Tis only now and then you'll come across a frank fellow like me, not ashamed to own his poverty," and he laughed gaily in her face.

"It is refreshing, at least," she answered, smiling back, "to know there is such an anomaly existing. But I don't exactly comprehend;" she paused, hesitated, and glanced around the luxuriously furnished room.

"Comprehend what?" inquired Maurice. "How any one can acknowledge poverty's grim companionship, and still be cheerful and happy? If you cannot comprehend that, then you have not yet been taught how much more precious are heart and mind and soul than riches, which take to themselves wings." His tone was grave and earnest, and swinging open a French window looking out upon the garden, he added gently, "Will you not come out with me and look at the pictures which a Divine hand paints every day for the poor man's eye?"

She glanced at the busy group around the piano, at the farther end of the long rooms, and quietly followed him. He led her some distance from the house, past the blooming flower-beds and gorgeous conservatory, to a rustic arbour, built on a ledge of rocks, from the crevices of which the scarlet heads of a few late columbines peeped out. The rising ground where they stood commanded a fine view of the river, flowing through an emerald green meadow, with beyond it a grove of tall, hazy pines, and further still in the distance, dark and distinct against the cloudless sky, a rising line of hills.

"Here," said Maurice, his black eye lighting up with enthusiasm, "here is a picture one may gaze upon while he is still at work. The poor man truly has an artist constantly at work for him. What finer gallery can a nobleman boast of? Now tell me what it is you cannot comprehend?"

Once away from the drawing-room, his companion's timidity or reserve had vanished. She looked up with a free, fearless glance, and answered at once. "I did not understand how you could appreciate poverty, living amid the surroundings of wealth, that was all. And yet I confess it still puzzles me that you should look so cheerfully, it seems to me exultingly, upon a life of toil and struggle."

"Yes, that is just the word," he cried, eagerly. "I own it. I do exult in the consciousness of being poor. But why is it strange? Do you see this strong right hand? It is that, and the ardent, throbbing, life-stirring brain and nerve, that shall win me fortune and riches of my own, that I shall owe to no one. And that is why I exult in being poor at the commencement." He paused, threw back his proud head, like a war-horse when he snuffs the far-off battle, and with his eagle eye fixed on the distant hills, added, "Ay, because I shall win my fortune myself;" and then a moment after, his eye advanced upward to the bright sky, as he said, reverently, "God permitting, I mean, of course!"

Had it been a youthful Hercules standing before her, those brown eyes could not have gazed more admiringly; and suddenly a tear came glistening over the lustrous orbs, and laying the little snowflake hand impulsively on his arm, she said, "I believe you. I like you, and I am sure we shall be friends." He smiled brightly as he turned towards her. "Thank you," said he. "I agree with you, for something has already whispered to me, we shall be the truest of friends, which is more than your cousin, the heiress yonder, can ever say."

"And why, pray?" asked Flora.

"Because," replied he, "her father's heavy coffers lie between."

A pink flush just shone a moment on her cheek, and vanished. He imagined she had guessed the hidden meaning of his words, and to relieve the embarrassment, led the way to the workshop, saying courteously, "It may be a novelty for you. If you choose, you may come in, and see the theatre of my ambitious labours."

She followed, interested, and quite at ease. He pointed out the half-completed model, and said, seriously, "There is my hobby, the talisman that is to grant my fairy wishes. See how it looks, so insignificant, and grim, and unpolished! yet, if no one steps before me, I feel confident that will some day bring me both gold and fame." His eye was wandering with flattering hopes, his thoughts she saw plainly were far away, forgetful of her presence. "Ay," murmured he, brushing the wheels with a tender hand, "gold and fame! perishing things both. Love were better than either. So I mean to win that, too, but not with fortune—no, never with fortune."

She thought he looked as if he had only to speak, and all three were at his bidding. Then as his last words echoed in her ear, the same pink flush dyed her delicate cheek, and looking up into his face, she merely said, "Well!"

He laughed, and shook his head, as if throwing off the cobwebs from his brain, and then continued, "I told you I would not indulge myself in dreams, yet here I was lost completely, in a most seductive one, in your very presence. Does 'well' mean 'what more?' Why, this is all. I am going to work here, and there, and everywhere, with what my college education has done for me; but enter a profession I won't; for these hands of mine must have active work as well as my brain. See how large they are!—like sinews of iron, and nerves of steel. Don't you think they would feel ashamed if they were penning sermons, or turning over law-books, or resting their huge clasp on emaciated wrists? Pshaw!"

His glance wandered from the hands he held towards her to the little fingers clasping a stalk of columbine. "Ah," he said, smiling, "see the contrast between those soft little fingers, with their pearl and rose-tipped daintiness and these!" and he took her hand admiringly in his, and spread it open on his palm. "And yet," he added, with a mischievous sparkle in his eye, "they look well together; the contrast is becoming to both."

She blushed crimson this time, and dropping her hand, he led the way to the house, saying, as they reached the steps again, "What an odd conversation we have had for our first! What did you say, or do, or look, that you have won all my thoughts away from me?"

"Well, Harry," said Maurice, looking up from his book, as late that evening his brother came dashing into the room they shared together, "are you already on the high road to fortune?"

"I can't tell that, Maurice," he replied; "but I do know one does not often find an heiress such a charming creature as that. I'm desperately in love, already."

"Gold has a magical way of gilding up common clay," was the dry response.

"For shame! you're a perfect heathen, Maurice. How can you insinuate there is any thing common about her?"

"About whom?" he asked.

"Miss Egerton," was the reply, "the charming, lovely Florence!"

"Nonsense, Harry; I tell you 'tis the money bags that have bewitched you. Do you think if they had come into the room to-night, both cottage girls in simple white, you would have lingered longest at the side of that tall, dashing woman, while the sweet girlish Flora was before you? I tell you nay, brother Harry."

"Flora," said Harry; "who is that? I saw no Flora."

"I dare say not," replied Maurice. "However, I won't quarrel with you for not being in love with Flora. Win the heiress by all means, if you can. As for me, sometime——take care, that's an inkstand your elbow has overturned!"

Gay doings at Carew Place made the days and weeks fly swiftly. The house was constantly thronged with visitors, much to Anna's delight and Harry's annoyance. So bright a prize could not be neglected, and the charming Miss Egerton was besieged by a crowd of suitors. It must be confessed, however, that her smiles and favours were all bestowed upon Harry, who hardly dared credit his own good fortune. Maurice was scarcely civil, when all the rest were so obsequious, but he was so little in her society, that his indifference passed unremarked. And the quiet, humble Flora, likewise, was seldom seen amid their fashionable coterie, which was however owing to her own choice; for she was in reality too lovely and refined to miss receiving admiration and attention from the more observing. She seemed to have a distaste for drawing-room pleasures, and preferred wandering with book or pencil through the pleasant grounds and country fields about the place. Maurice was frequently her companion in these pleasant walks. Often and often, too, she might have been found sitting on the bench in the little workshop, while Maurice filed, and fitted, and arranged his model, chatting merrily with him when he rested, and gazing admiringly upon him when he was busy in calculation or earnest labour.

Singularly enough too it came to pass that Maurice felt more satisfied and happy when the quiet little figure was there, intercepting the broad stream of sunshine from the window, and he began to realise a strange loss and vacancy when the seat was empty, and he had the light full and strong upon his work. The day came when he said as much. Little Flora blushed as vividly as the carnation, fastened in her simple muslin dress, and said, archly, "But if it were Miss Egerton, the heiress, you would wish me to go away?"

"Certainly, with Miss Egerton I have nothing to do. I associate only with people of my own rank," was the emphatic reply.

A strange little ripple arched the dimpled lips, and an uneasy flicker disturbed the soft brown eye. She half rose to her feet, then sat down again, and with averted face replied, "I can't imagine why you should cherish such an antipathy against poor Florence. Is it a crime for her to be rich?"

"I can't imagine why you need to care about it," he said, a little testily. "She has homage enough without mine. I repeat, I like riches, when honourably earned by one's self. To speak plainly, it is only with a wife they are so hateful. I may as well acknowledge, once for all, it is the present fashion of poor young men seeking to mend their fortunes by marrying a rich wife, that has filled me with such a horror of all young ladies so unfortunate, in my opinion, as to possess fortunes." He looked earnestly towards her, but the chestnut curls still concealed her averted face. "I hope you are not grieved for your cousin," he added. "She'll not pine at the coolness of a plebeian like me." And he laughed merrily.

She did not echo the laugh, but remained a long time silent, until all at once she asked, "Are you as rigorous against concealment, too? Would you not forgive a little innocent deceit practised through friendly motives?"

"Deceit is never friendly," was his grave reply; when, to his astonishment, Flora burst into tears, and before he could recall her, ran away out of sight.

He came upon her again that evening in the arbour, sobbing bitterly. She looked like a fairy in the moonlight, so slender and delicate. But those tears! Ah, when Maurice saw those glistening drops upon her cheek, his heart gave a mighty throb, and the secret he had so resolutely imprisoned there, came rushing forth. For once his strength and iron will failed him. Love, that mightiest of magicians, was more powerful than either. Before he was conscious of the act, he had caught in his the little hands so tightly clenched, in this inexplicable grief, and whispered softly, "Flora, dearest Flora, if tears must fall, give me the blessed privilege to kiss them all away!"

The bright moonlight revealed plainly the sudden flash of joy that danced across her face, and then vanished in deeper sadness.

"Flora, little Flora," said Maurice, "you who have stolen into my heart and taken a place closer and holier than ambition, or of fame, or wealth, will you not give me some hope that when I have won my way to competency, I may claim a reward from you?"

She tore away her hands from his, wrung them despairingly, and faltered, "Wait till to-morrow, Maurice. I will tell you all to-morrow." And then she fled away from him.

Lightly as a wild bird, her white robes like its fleecy plumage, she sped along the walks, up the staircase and into the chamber where Miss Egerton had just retired, radiant and blushing from a garden stroll with Harry. The tall, queenly figure was reposing indolently against the crimson velvet easy-chair, the brilliant black eyes wandering dreamily about the apartment, when little Flora came dashing breathlessly to her side.

"So you are here!" cried Miss Egerton, a little sharply. "I was just wanting you. I am tired of this, I say; it is a cruel jest, and it must end. I have enjoyed it hitherto; but the rose has thorns, and I begin to feel them."

"You, Florence!" stammered little Flora, through the rising sob. "What can trouble you?"

"How can one help being foolish, when foolishness is the inherited constitutional weakness of a woman's character?" she asked. "That Harry is bent upon making himself irresistible, and—I'm wretchedly afraid he has succeeded. And don't I know these men are mercenary creatures, every one? Take away the hundred thousand pounds, and what do you think will become of Harry Allen's offer of marriage and declaration of undying love made this evening in the garden to Florence Egerton—Miss Egerton, of Egerton fortunes, you understand?" And the haughty beauty gave a scornful laugh, whose jarring bitterness sorely touched the already overflowing heart of little Flora.

Suddenly the latter raised her head, and dashed the tears away proudly. "No, no, Florence," said she, "they are not all mercenary. Truly there is one—but let it pass. Keep it still, now, always—dear Florence, I can forego the fortune, but I will not lose him."

The listener's face was turned towards her in amazement. "Are you insane, Flora?" she asked. "Who is it you will not lose?"

Whereupon Florence and Flora Egerton, arms interlaced, and chestnut curls and raven braids closely blending, made to each other, with an odd mingling of smiles, tears, and blushes, a long recital—not meant for other ears.

The next morning, to their mutual astonishment, Maurice and Harry met face to face in the library, whither they had repaired to keep very different appointments. At the same moment both the Misses Egerton came gliding in; but a strange metamorphosis had taken place. The tall, queenly maiden, wore the simple muslin, and the tiny sylph was robed in glistening gossamer, the white arms circled with bands of gold and the chestnut curls looped away with a spray of pearl. The gentlemen gazed bewilderedly at the apparition. One could hardly tell which face wore the most blank and pitiable expression, of these astonished lovers.

Then little Flora laid her head on Maurice's arms, and the brown eyes—the soft brown eyes no change could come upon—looked up to his, through pleading tears.

"Maurice, dear Maurice," said she, "I answer now—I love you. Will it take away the love you offered last night, to know I am Florence Egerton, who owns to-day some hundred thousand pounds, but will throw this fortune all away to-morrow, if you will not take her with it?"

Poor Maurice! what a trial it was, to have loved, have wooed and won the heiress, after all! He could scarcely understand it yet. But there she stood—the same sweet face and gentle eyes and glossy curls. He loved her; he could not learn to unlove her. What could he do?

And the stately cousin—shivering and trembling, she had turned to the disconcerted Harry, saying, "I told you last night, Mr. Allen, you should have your answer to-day; but to-day finds me another person, and you are released from the consequences of all attentions bestowed upon the heiress."

One moment (honour to Harry!) only one moment did the doubt and hesitation linger on his countenance. The next, he took respectfully the outstretched hand.

"If another person to-day, fair Florence—or Flora, if you will—let me repeat anew the declaration; and since you are nearer my own station, I shall venture to plead more boldly."

What a smile released the compressed and quivering lips, as the hand was left in his! Then it was the heiress came forward from Maurice's encircling arm, saying joyously, "She is not quite penniless yet, Mr. Allen, for half my father's fortune shall be her wedding portion. Nay nay, dear Flora, not a word. It is only justice, after this dangerous masquerade, and I am only obliging Maurice here, who is longing so much to be poor, that he may work and become rich. After all, it may be a good lesson for every one of us; for now we have full assurance that fortune-seeking and fortune-hating may both be cured through failure.

Not many months afterwards, a double marriage was announced at one of our fashionable churches, where the brides resigned the names that had perplexed acquaintances so long, and were neither Flora nor Florence Egerton again. At the same time came the announcement of the invention of a remarkably ingenious machine, which was attracting the attention of the whole country, simplifying toil, yet opening up new fields of employment to the willing workman. So Maurice, fortunate fellow, had won the three—Wealth and Fame and Love!

M. T. C.

THE TASKS OF THE FLOWERS.

Wake to your tasks, fair flowers!
Wake! 'tis the shining Spring!
Gladden our Summer hours
With radiant blossoming.

The cold, dark reign of Winter,
With its dreary gloom is o'er;
Come now to gild the vales of earth,
As bright as heretofore.

The glad bee on the sunny bank
Shall woo your blossoms wild,
And the mother in the meadow
Shall pull you for her child;

And lovers see your fairest one
Shine starlike in their bowers:
Oh, what were earth without your charm,
Heaven's brightest gift, sweet flowers!

You've a hopeful task, young flowers,
To rise, a dazzling throng,
'Neath April's scented showers,
And sunshine, joy, and song.

When the grass, to greet your coming,
Waves verdant o'er the lea,
Oh, welcome, lovely flowers,
Your advent still shall be!

You've a joyful task, glad flowers,
'Mid scenes of pomp and mirth,
To gild in festive hours
The homes and shrines of earth.

You're wreathed around the flushing brow
Of the victor in his pride,
And blush upon the changing cheek
Of the fair and timid bride;

And though you deck the prince's hall
With bright and graceful spell,
You bloom upon the cottage wall
As lovely and as well.

You've a lovely task, wild flowers,
To gild the ruins gray
Of proud old halls and towers,
Fast crumbling to decay.

And watch, like silent sentinels,
Around each saddening scene,
Where the haunts of love and loveliness
And pomp and pride have been.

You've a mournful task, sad flowers,
When, by Sorrow's pale hand shed,
You droop in fading watchfulness
Like mourners o'er the dead;

When young eyes, dimm'd by weeping,
Droop wearily in woe,
When forms, too fair and loved for earth,
Lie cold and still below.

You've a warning task, frail flowers,
To show, by fading bloom,
How brief are life's sad hours,
How certain is the tomb!

How grandeur, power, and beauty
Flourish, to fade and fall;
And earth, our loved and lovely earth,
Is the sepulchre of all!

Yes, blent with all of life below,
In many a varied scene
Of hope and fear, of joy and woe,
Bright flowers, have ye been!

In all of blight or beauty,
In all of joy or gloom,
The festal board, the funeral pall,
The bower, the shrine, the tomb!

Yet, welcome, radiant messengers!
By Love eternal given,
To gild the summer vales of earth,
And breathe and bloom in Heaven.

M. T. W.

AMBITION.

Chapter XII.

Gerald reached the house of which Polly was an inmate, and knocking at the door inquired for Miss Simmonds. "The first floor, sir," said the landlady. Gerald, mounting the stairs, knocked at the door of the first floor, and was told to come in. On his entrance, Miss Simmonds, for she it was, started up, and after looking at him for a moment, exclaimed, "Is it possible? Captain De Lacy!"

"Yes, Miss Simmonds," replied Gerald, "I discovered you through your parrot, and thought that perhaps the visit of an acquaintance of former days might not be unwelcome."

"I am glad to see you," said Miss Simmonds. "Pray sit down. Do you know anything about Kitty?"

"I do," replied Gerald, calmly. "She is now Countess of Ellismore."

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Miss Simmonds. "What a lucky girl! She took herself off—though perhaps I ought not to have let her go; but it was all the fault of that base Mr. Chaffey. Oh, Captain De Lacy, you have no idea how I was deceived in that villain!"

"I can easily imagine it," said Gerald; "but I expected that you had become Mrs. Chaffey by this time, and hesitated before I asked if Miss Simmonds was at home."

"Thank Heaven, I escaped that!" said Miss Simmonds; "but I will just tell you how he behaved to me. I did promise to marry him, the vile hypocrite! And he persuaded me to sell my furniture and come to London previously to our embarking for America, where his friend Mr. Wiley had gone to see after an immense business they had there (a brace of swindlers!) And I took lodgings in James Street, Mile End, from his recommendation. He took charge of all my trinkets and my ready money, but seemed vexed and disappointed on discovering that my annuity could only be paid to myself. He tried to persuade me to sell it for a certain sum of money; but very luckily, this was not easy to do, so he became very fidgetty, and wanted to get away from England. One day, while he was dining with me, the officers entered and arrested him for being concerned with Wiley in embezzling a very large sum from a country bank. The officers told me that he had imposed on every one by his hypocrisy, and that the managers of the bank would have trusted him with untold gold. His real name wasn't Chaffey, and he wore a gray wig for disguise. I was very thankful that he was found out, and the more so when,

on searching his lodgings, the officers found all my trinkets, which they returned to me. My money, however, was gone."

"And where is he now?" asked Gerald.

"He was condemned to ten years penal servitude," said Miss Simmonds, "and little enough too! But what a very lucky creature Kitty is! I must write to her."

"She has attained rank and wealth," said Gerald, "but happiness is not always ensured by their possession."

"True," said Miss Simmonds, solemnly.

"But," continued Gerald, "a strange circumstance is, that a few doors from you there is a young woman who is lady's maid to the Countess of Ellismore, and who says she lived with you at Woolford. She has met with a serious accident. Her name was Betsy Green."

"I remember her well enough," said Miss Simmonds, disdainfully, "and want to have nothing to do with her. If the Countess of Ellismore chooses to encourage such a character I will not."

"Her character is very good, Miss Simmonds," said Gerald; "she married, however, a man who deserted her."

"Well, I don't want to see her," said Miss Simmonds.

She would not go and see Betsy; and Gerald, finding her obdurate, departed.

Gerald could not help wondering at the alteration visible in Miss Simmonds. Instead of the scrupulous attention she used formerly to pay to her dress, she now appeared to be clothed in little better than rags, and looked a deplorable object. He called at the prison on his way home to relieve Atkinson's mind of anxiety; and he told him also that he had seen a former mistress of Betsy's, Miss Simmonds.

"I was quite astonished yesterday, Captain De Lacy, on hearing Betsy mention her," said Atkinson. "The packet Lord Delmar gave me was directed to Messrs. Curtis and Hayward, Lincoln's Inn, for Miss Simmonds. It is in a safe place, however, if I could get at it."

"Can I get it for the poor woman?" asked Gerald.

"It will be such a trouble for you, sir," replied Atkinson.

"Never mind the trouble," said Gerald.

"Then I'll tell you where it is, at least where it was safe a week ago," said Atkinson. "About two miles from Enfield there is a farm called Woodley Farm, and in an old barn on that farm you'll find the packet in a tin box, buried under a heap of rubbish. I first carried it about with me, then I became afraid of something happening; and one Sunday, when I went down to Enfield for quiet, I hit upon this hiding-place."

"You must give me clearer directions to find it out, however," said Gerald.

"You can't miss it, sir," said Atkinson. "When you get to the Dragon, if you stand at the door, you'll see a building, exactly in a straight line across the fields, and that's the barn."

"Well," said Gerald, "I will visit it to-morrow, and then your conscience will be easy. Have you seen Mr. Worrall yet?"

"He called this morning, sir," replied Atkinson, "and says he is pretty sure to get me off with six months' imprisonment. But, really, sir, when I look back, I am surprised that I should have been able to go on swindling people as I have. I could almost fancy that people like being cheated. I assure you, Captain De Lacy, that more than half the people I have defrauded let me have credit without taking the trouble to make any inquiries about me. I talked very grandly, dressed very finely, insisted on having the best of everything, and they swallowed all the stories I chose to tell them. Perhaps, if I had found more difficulty in cheating, I should have turned my thoughts towards gaining an honest livelihood."

"People are certainly very apt to judge from appearances," said Gerald, who could not help smiling mournfully at Atkinson's defence of his conduct, and reflecting that he, too, had judged from appearances, for had he not thought his Kitty the incarnation of truth and fidelity? He repeated his promise of going for the packet on the morrow, and then left the prison.

As Gerald rode home he felt almost astonished that the knowledge of Kitty's treachery should not affect him more; but after the first shock was over, he seemed to be able to think of her heartlessness without pain, and on her loss without regret.

Chapter XIII.

True to his word, Gerald went to Enfield, and found the packet where Atkinson had left it. He returned to town, and proceeded to Miss Simmonds's lodgings, calling, however, at the prison on his way, where he found the faithful Betsy, who was much better.

"I have not been able to write to dear Kitty yet, Captain De Lacy, because I have hurt my thumb most dreadfully, so cannot hold my pen," said Miss Simmonds, who seemed surprised at seeing him again, but was nevertheless very civil.

"I am sorry for that," said Gerald; "but my visit to-day is upon a matter of business. It would appear that Mr. Chaffey was not the only dishonest person you have had to deal with in your time. Did you ever know a man named Atkinson?"

Miss Simmonds turned very pale, and replied in faint tones, "I did."

"It appears," said Gerald, "that the late Lord Delmar gave him a packet directed to Messrs. Hayward and Curtis, of Lincoln's Inn, in trust for you. I have this packet in my possession; but I think it would be advisable for me to deliver it into the hands of the lawyers, after which you can claim it."

"How very kind of you, Captain De Lacy, to be sure!" exclaimed Miss Simmonds. "But whatever can that packet contain? Surely he never discovered——" Here she appeared greatly agitated, and then said—"Do what you consider best, Captain De Lacy. But perhaps I might take the packet to Mr. Hayward myself. Would you mind coming with me? I have not one friend in the world."

Now Gerald was of an amiable, unselfish disposition, and did not care for inconveniencing himself so that he could be of service to others, and he immediately said, "I shall be happy to accompany you, Miss Simmonds, as I may be of some use in identifying you."

"Old Mr. Hayward knows me," she replied in a nervous manner; "but he may be dead. It's very likely."

Forthwith she proceeded with trembling hands to attire herself for walking. But Gerald, unable to stand the ordeal of walking the streets in company with so queer a figure, sent for a cab, and escorting Miss Simmonds to the entrance of the court, assisted her into the vehicle, entered it himself, and told the man to drive to Lincoln's Inn.

On reaching Mr. Hayward's office, they were introduced to a middle-aged man, who informed them that his father was dead; but on examining the packet, he said if he were satisfied that the lady before him was Miss Simmonds, he would deliver it to her, of course. Gerald immediately sent for a gentleman living at no great distance, who knew Mr. Hayward; and then, having satisfied him of his respectability, identified Miss Simmonds. He then explained why she had come with the packet; and Mr. Hayward handed it to her. Her fingers clutched it with greedy avidity, and she could scarcely wait until she was seated in the cab to open it. Well was it that she had implored Gerald to accompany her home; for she had scarcely read half-a-dozen lines of the first paper that caught her eye, than she fainted away. Gerald stopped the cab, and calling at the nearest chemist's, obtained restoratives, and at last saw her safely to her own lodgings.

During the drive from the chemist's Miss Simmonds had been perfectly silent. She pressed Gerald's hand once or twice, but looked no more at the papers, which Gerald had placed together on the seat; and on reaching her home her suppressed feelings burst forth, and she sobbed hysterically. Gerald endeavoured to soothe her, and at last succeeded.

"Oh, Captain De Lacy!" she said, "you are a good, kind, young man. Never will Kitty have such a husband as you would have made her. But I will have no secrets from you; and how sorry I am that I did not agree to your marrying Kitty instead of letting myself be talked over by that wretch, Chaffey!"

"Do not reproach yourself on that score, my good Miss Simmonds," said Gerald kindly. "I begin to think with respect to Kitty, as you do with regard to Mr. Chaffey—that I have had a lucky escape. If she could so soon forget and betray me for rank and wealth, she is not worth a single sigh." He smiled as he spoke, but it was a mournful smile.

"You are right there," said Miss Simmonds; "but if I had acted differently towards her she might have been a different creature. I have been an unnatural mother towards her, that's the fact."

"A mother!" exclaimed Gerald. "Is she then your daughter?"

"Read these," said Miss Simmonds, placing the packet of papers in his hands, "and you will know all."

Gerald looked over the papers, and saw first a certificate of marriage between Eustace Mountmorris and Grace Simmonds; then the baptismal extract of Katherine, child of Eustace and Grace Mountmorris; and lastly he read a letter written by Lord Delmar on his death-bed, addressed to his wife, in which he reproached himself for having deceived her by pretending that he was not lawfully married to her, and then he went on to say that had their child lived he would have done her tardy justice by acknowledging her. He implored her forgiveness, and wished that her death-bed might be more peaceful than his.

"What does this mean about the child?" asked Gerald.

"It means," said Miss Simmonds (for so we will continue to call her), "that he fancied our child was dead. When he told me we were not legally married, I implicitly believed him. I never dreamed of his deceiving me; but I almost lost my senses. While I thought I was his wife, I cared not for people's sneers; but when I found I had no right to the name, I would no longer remain under his roof. I left him, and with my child travelled about as Miss Simmonds, passing the child off as my niece, and soon after put her to school in France. The scarlet fever broke out in the school, Kitty caught it, and was not expected to live, so I sent word to Lord Delmar that she was dead. I have done her grievous injury. She would now be the acknowledged daughter of Lord Delmar. The title went to his cousin, and the estates also, except one or two which Lord Delmar bequeathed to him. Little does Kitty think that her ignorant aunt has as much right to be called 'my lady,' as herself. And oh, Captain De Lacy, little can any one imagine how I doated on my husband! I was silly and vain, but I was a faithful loving wife. Why he could have behaved so cruelly to me, I cannot imagine."

"Atkinson says it was because he had fallen in love with an Italian lady," said Gerald, "and wished to marry her."

"Ah!" she exclaimed; "I remember."

Miss Simmonds then fell into a fit of musing, while Gerald wondered in his own mind at the strange chain of circumstances which had taken place. Kitty was of noble birth—quite equal to his own—on the one hand, and on the other he had wealth sufficient to have supported them according to their rank had she remained true, and he sighed deeply.

"Never mind, Captain De Lacy," said Miss Simmonds, "you will be happy yet. Something tells me so. For myself, I fancy I have not long to live. A strange chilliness seems to creep over me, and my eyes swim. I cannot see."

Gerald became alarmed, and summoned the landlady, who sent off at once for medical attendance. The gentleman who came pronounced Miss Simmonds to be attacked by paralysis, and having administered the proper remedies, desired that, as soon as the patient was able to take an interest in what was passing round her, her mind should be kept free from all anxiety, if possible.

Having seen that every attention had been paid to Miss Simmonds, and that a respectable nurse had been engaged, Gerald left, promising to call again in the evening. He performed his promise, and found that a slight change for the better had taken place. Miss Simmonds was perfectly sensible, and her speech was not quite so indistinct. She had asked for him, it appeared, and on seeing him her eyes lighted up.

"Send for Kitty," she said. "I wish to see her."

Gerald was extremely distressed by this request. *He* write to Kitty! He could not. At last he hit upon an expedient. He was unwilling to deny the poor creature the consolation of seeing her child, perhaps for the last time, so he begged the medical attendant to write a few lines to the Countess of Ellismore, saying that Miss Simmonds had been taken suddenly ill, and wished to see the countess, as she had a revelation of importance to make to her.

Mr. Baldwin wrote as directed, and on the fourth morning from that day the Countess of Ellismore stood at the sick woman's bedside. The invalid appeared pleased to see her, and addressed her as Countess of Ellismore with great exultation, but every now and then looked about as if expecting somebody. At last she said to the nurse, "Is Captain De Lacy here?"

"No, ma'am," was the reply; the nurse, according to Gerald's orders, not informing her that he had called, but on hearing that Lady Ellismore was up-stairs had hurried away again.

Lady Ellismore started at the name, and said in her kindest voice, "Does Gerald—Captain—De Lacy come to see you, aunt?"

"He is the kindest—best——" said Miss Simmonds, feebly. "Not aunt, Kitty—mother—mother; you are my child, but he will tell you all," and she closed her eyes as if to sleep.

Lady Ellismore was quite perplexed by what she heard. She could not understand it. One thing, however, she clearly understood, which was that, De Lacy came to see her aunt.

As soon as the invalid was asleep, Lady Ellismore cross-questioned the nurse so adroitly that she elicited from her that De Lacy had been that morning, but on hearing she was there had gone away immediately. A smile of triumph flashed across her countenance as she said to the nurse, "The next time he calls do not say that I am here, but show him into the next room, and then come to me."

"I will, ma'am," said the nurse, closing her fingers on a sovereign.

In the evening Gerald called again, and was told that nobody was with Miss Simmonds. He was ushered into the front room, and had not been there a minute when the door opened, and Lady Ellismore stood before him. He appeared petrified at the sight of her, but she advanced towards him.

"Gerald—Captain De Lacy, I would say—forgive this seeming abruptness," she said, in her softest tones; "but on such occasions as this, form and ceremony must be cast aside. My aunt has referred me to you for the explanation of some strange allusions she has made. I am quite at a loss to understand them."

This was plunging at once into business. And she had artfully addressed him in a friendly, unembarrassed way. However, during the few words she had uttered, Gerald had nerved himself to look at her. She was beautiful—to him, indeed, painfully beautiful. She was taller than when he had last seen her; her form had expanded, and her whole appearance was graceful and lovely. Gerald was almost unmanned at the first glance of that once-loved face, but the thought, "She is my uncle's wife," seemed to brace his nerves with iron, and coming forward from the chimney-piece, against which he had been leaning when she entered the room, he said, handing her a chair, "If your ladyship will take a seat, I will give you every information in my power."

Lady Ellismore did not quite like this. His voice was so steady, and his manner so self-possessed, that they surprised himself. The countess took a seat; he followed her example, and then, as concisely as possible, told her all that related to Chaffey, to Lord Delmar, to herself—in fact, everything that the reader is already acquainted with. She heard him in silence, her face, however, undergoing wonderful changes while she listened to him. Surprise, anger, exultation, were depicted on it by turns, but an expression of grief came over it at last, and when he had concluded his narrative, she exclaimed, in tones of anguish, "Oh, why did I not know this before! What misery should I have been spared!"

"The ways of Providence are inscrutable," said Gerald, gravely. "It is not fit for us to question its decrees."

"It is well for you to say that," said Lady Ellismore, impetuously; "you are——but I forget," and she stopped.

Gerald said no more; and, after an awkward silence, Lady Ellismore rose, saying, "I must now go to my mother;" then muttering, in an under tone, "Thank Heaven! he cannot now taunt me with the bar sinister." Then, turning her lovely eyes, swimming in tears, towards Gerald, she said, in faltering tones, holding out her hand, "Gerald! we may be friends, may we not?"

"Friends! madam," exclaimed Gerald, in tones that froze her very heart, at the same time concentrating a lifetime of reproachful contempt in the fixed glance he gave her. She turned slowly away, and left the room.

"It is over," said Gerald to himself, as the door closed after her. "Thank Heaven! her power to fascinate me is past."

With Gerald it was now the triumph of principle over passion. Where he could not respect, he could not love, and he rejoiced at being freed from the fetters which had trammelled him but a short time before. He saw Miss Simmonds, whose dim eyes always brightened up at his approach; and from that day continued to visit her regularly, treating Lady Ellismore with a cold politeness that aggravated her beyond description, for she saw that he had broken his chain.

At length Death claimed his victim, and Miss Simmonds expired peacefully, with her last breath blessing Gerald for his kindness to her. Gerald followed her to the grave; and, in obedience to Lady Ellismore's wishes, had no tombstone placed over her remains.

"I cannot allow any name but that which she is rightfully entitled to bear to be inscribed on her tomb," said Lady Ellismore. "Lady Delmar would excite remark, and I think that the unhappy marriage of my parents had better be consigned to oblivion. As I have the proofs of it, however, they can be produced, should my legitimacy be ever questioned. I am extremely indebted to you, Captain De Lacy, for the trouble you have taken—trouble that you had no right to take on my account."

"Pray do not allude to that," said Gerald; "I am always happy to spare any lady the task of performing duties which must be ever painful. I believe all is settled according to your ladyship's wishes." Lady Ellismore answered by an inclination of the head. Gerald rose, and said quietly, "I will now wish your ladyship good morning."

Lady Ellismore tried to speak, but the effort seemed to choke her; she placed her handkerchief to her eyes, and Gerald left her. They had parted never to meet again.

Chapter XIV.

A fortnight before the events narrated in the last chapter occurred, Lord Ellismore was being waited upon by Norris one morning, and noticed that faithful personage's behaviour to be rather extraordinary. In the first place he sighed most audibly; in the next, when Lord Ellismore addressed him, he seemed not to hear him, or if he did, he replied to him at random. At last, Lord Ellismore, never very patient, got into a passion.

"Why, Norris," said he, "what the—what is the matter with you? I can hardly believe that you are in your right senses."

"I beg your pardon, my lord," said Norris, in a very contrite tone, "but I hope you'll excuse me, my lord. I am very unhappy." And here he heaved a tremendous sigh.

Now, Norris was, perhaps, the only being in the world for whom Lord Ellismore felt the least regard. Norris had nursed him in sickness, had done his bidding in health, and altogether knew his ways so well, that he had become quite indispensable to him. Moreover, Lord Ellismore felt very curious to know what could possibly make Norris unhappy.

"What makes you unhappy, Norris?" he said, very kindly. "Are you regretting Italy? Is the old castle too dull for you?"

"Oh, no, my lord, not at all," replied Norris, quickly. "I was quite cheerful and contented until this morning. But I'm no boy to forget easily."

"Oh, a love affair!" said Ellismore, smiling. "I should have thought a steady, sober, matter-of-fact fellow like you, Norris, above such folly. I confess it surprises me."

"Ah, my lord!" said Norris, pathetically, "we can't escape our fate."

"But why should you be unhappy about it?" asked Lord Ellismore, much amused.

"Well, my lord," said Norris, "the fact is this: Mrs. Atkinson, my lady's ladysmaid, has suddenly left, without saying where or why she was going, and I made bold to ask my lady why she was gone, and my lady said it was a secret. Not that I had the slightest hope of marrying Mrs. Atkinson, for her husband is alive I believe; but still it was a pleasure to be under the same roof with her, and to see her every day. And now she is gone."

This was said with such a rueful countenance, and in such a pathetic tone of voice, that Lord Ellismore felt very much inclined to laugh. But then Lady Ellismore had refused to impart consolation to Norris, by withholding from him the whereabouts of Mrs. Atkinson, and he instantly determined to insist upon knowing where she was gone.

"Well, my good fellow," said his lordship, "I will see what I can do for you. I will ask Lady Ellismore where your friend Mrs. Atkinson is gone. We will see whether she will refuse to tell *me*."

"Oh, my lord!" said Norris, in an ecstacy of gratitude, "you are too good to me!"

"There now, go, Norris," said Lord Ellismore, "and make your mind easy."

With a light heart, at least comparatively so, Norris left Lord Ellismore, who walked across the gallery which divided his apartments from those of the countess. He knocked at the door of Lady Ellismore's morning room, and was told to "come in." In he walked, and on seeing him Lady Ellismore started up in astonishment, and seizing a miniature which lay on the table, hastily endeavoured to conceal it by putting it into her pocket. Lord Ellismore however saw the movement.

"So! Lady Ellismore, you have secrets from me!" he exclaimed. "Why have you hidden that miniature? Whose is it? I insist upon knowing."

He fancied that Atkinson's sudden departure, and Lady Ellismore's possession of a miniature, must have some connection together.

"Tell me this instant," he repeated, as his wife did not reply, "whose portrait have you concealed?"

"My father's!" said Lady Ellismore boldly. "It was given to me upon condition of my not allowing it to be seen by any body."

"Not even by your husband! A likely story, truly," said Lord Ellismore, sarcastically. "But I am very desirous of seeing your father's venerable features, and will thank you for a sight of the portrait."

Lady Ellismore reflected a moment, and then considering that her husband had certainly a right to see the miniature, she placed it in his hands without a word. An exclamation of surprise burst from his lips when he saw the portrait.

"Why, this is Lord Delmar!" said he. "It must be he! We were intimate friends once, and I am almost sure I was with him when this very picture was taken. Linnell painted it. Let me see."

Displacing part of the case, he saw the name "Linnell" underneath the portrait. He looked bewildered, while Lady Ellismore stood by in haughty silence.

"And Lord Delmar was your father!" he said at last. "Well, there is a great likeness, certainly, and it is strange that I should not have remarked it before, considering how intimate we once were. But, Lady Ellismore, if you are Lord Delmar's daughter, the bar sinister must figure on your escutcheon, for Lord Delmar was never married."

"Lord Ellismore," said the countess, "all that I know respecting this portrait is, that my aunt gave it to me, telling me that it was my father's

picture. I have known for some time that it resembled Lord Delmar, from an old man named Parker, who had been in his service, having observed the resemblance."

"What! old Anthony Parker!" exclaimed Lord Ellismore. "Of course he would know it! Poor old fellow! What a crowd of boyish recollections his name brings to my memory! Delmar and I were close allies as boys, and we used to plague him famously. What has become of him?"

"I should imagine he is dead by this time," replied Lady Ellismore. "His wife died, and he fell into a state of imbecility."

"Poor old Parker!" exclaimed Lord Ellismore, apparently softened by the recollections of his boyhood. "Well, all this is very strange, and at some future period I shall inquire further about the affair; but I have lost sight of my object in intruding upon you this morning. I wish you to inform me where your lady's maid has flown to. Norris is inconsolable for her absence, and I cannot imagine why you should make such a secret of her present place of abode."

Lady Ellismore could not help smiling to herself at the incongruity of her husband, the proud Lord Ellismore, meddling in the love affairs of his valet and her lady's maid; but she could easily have accounted for it, had she reflected that we are all made up of inconsistencies.

"I will tell your lordship why, and where she is gone, since you condescend to take an interest in the matter," she replied calmly. "Atkinson, my maid, is a married woman, and has gone to see her husband, who is now in prison on a charge of swindling, I believe, or something of the kind. So Norris had best console himself as he may."

"I am truly sorry for poor Norris," said Lord Ellismore, "and am much obliged to you, Lady Ellismore, for giving me the above particulars. I will now wish your ladyship good morning," he added, with a stately bow, as he quitted the room.

"Even Norris is thought more of than I am!" said Lady Ellismore, bitterly. "But I suppose no bar sinister attaches to him. Oh that I could ascertain the truth respecting myself!"

She had serious thoughts of writing to Betsy, and ordering her to leave no stone unturned until she had discovered where her aunt had gone to, though the only clue she had to find her was the post mark "Mile End," which she had observed on the letters Miss Simmonds had received just before they parted. But on reflection she resolved to wait a little longer, as Betsy had anxiety enough with her husband, without being tormented by other business of a troublesome nature.

The next morning's post brought a letter for the countess. The earl, who always opened the post-bag with his own hands, examined the missive with strange feelings. The address was in a man's hand, firm and bold, so it could not come from Betsy, whose cramped characters Lord Ellismore had already seen. The post mark was obliterated, too, so he could make nothing of that. He certainly felt curious to know who the letter came from; and after having glanced over his own correspondence, went with the portentous epistle in his hand to the countess's room. Lady Ellismore thought it very strange that he should seek her company for two consecutive mornings; but when he said, in his usual cold manner, "Good morning, Lady Ellismore—here is a letter for you," she turned pale. However, remembering that she had told Lord Ellismore of Gerald's love, she quickly recovered her composure, and looking at the direction said, "The handwriting is unknown to me."

She then opened it, and the earl was startled at the effect it appeared to produce on her. Having read it attentively, she placed it without a word in his hands. It was the letter Gerald had directed the medical man to write, summoning her to the bedside of Miss Simmonds.

"Without doubt," said the earl, when he had read the letter, "you will now hear something certain respecting your birth and parentage. You had better start as soon as possible. Norris shall attend you."

Lady Ellismore was agreeably surprised at this suggestion of the earl's. She had not expected him to propose her journeying to England. When all was ready for her departure, which, thanks to Norris's indefatigable exertions, was in a few hours, the earl presented her with a pocket-book, containing notes to a large amount, besides a cheque on his banker.

"The expenses on the road will be defrayed by Norris," said he; "but will you be able to travel without a female attendant, Lady Ellismore?"

"Perfectly so," was her reply. "Your lordship cannot surely have forgotten that, before I became Countess of Ellismore, 'I was an isolated being?'"

The earl bit his lip, but was silent; and Lady Ellismore continued, "If, however, your lordship thinks it improper or inexpedient for me to travel without a female attendant, I am willing to take either Martha or Judith."

"With Norris to protect you, I think it neither improper nor inexpedient," replied the earl. "However, Lady Ellismore, please yourself."

"Then I will content myself with Norris," said Lady Ellismore. "Where speed is so desirable, the fewer attendants the better."

The countess had advisedly refrained from ordering any of the female domestics at the castle to attend her. She did not care for Norris, but was averse to expose the poor dwelling of her aunt to the prying eyes of any of the women at Kilmacdaugh Castle. She travelled with the utmost speed, and during her journey said to herself more than once, "Had Lord Ellismore acted towards me at first as he has during the last two days, I should have learned to love him, but it is now too late!" She reached her destination in safety, and took up her abode with her aunt.

In the short letters she addressed to the earl, Lady Ellismore never alluded to the circumstances of her birth; still less did she mention having seen Gerald, and as Lord Ellismore heard regularly from Norris, he was perfectly satisfied.

Norris rode on the box of the carriage that conveyed Lady Ellismore to her aunt's humble lodgings, and called there every morning for orders. He saw Gerald enter the house two or three times, and, naturally enough, mistook him for a young doctor.

(To be concluded in our next.)

LOVE AND FEAR.

"Did you hear me, sir?" exclaimed Mr. Ramsay.

"I'm not deaf," muttered the boy in an undertone, not meant for the ear of his father, but reaching it nevertheless.

Anger instantly lit up the face of Mr. Ramsay; his eyes flashed with cruel purpose; his arm moved with an impulse to strike.

"Take care, sir!" Mr. Ramsay advanced towards the lad in a threatening manner; but restrained the hand half raised for a blow.

"Off with you, this instant!" he said, in a passion; "and don't let the grass grow under your feet. If you're not back in thirty minutes by the watch, I'll flog you within an inch of your life."

And Mr. Ramsay drew out his watch to note the time; then turned from the boy, actually trembling with excitement.

Richard, that was the lad's name, manifested neither fear nor alacrity; but, instead, a kind of dogged impassiveness. He made no response whatever. The stormy utterance of his father did not seem to affect him any more than if it had been the murmur of the wind in the trees overhead. Rising from the ground, where he had been sitting, with a piece of wood in his hand, which he was modelling into the form of a boat, he moved away with a loitering step. Not a sign beyond this was there that he had heard, understood, or intended to obey his father.

"Thirty minutes!" muttered Richard, as he walked along, as leisurely as if he had the day before him. "He knows I can't go in thirty minutes without running every step of the way there and back; and I'm not going to do it for him or any body else. Let him flog me if he will. I won't stand it long."

Quick footsteps would have taken Richard to the end of his short journey to a neighbour's house and back, in less than twenty-five minutes; but anger had awakened anger, and harshly applied force a feeling of resistance.

"I'm not a dog to be kicked!" so he argued with himself, "or a mule to be driven. That's not the way to treat a boy. Flog me within an inch of my life! I wish he would kill me one of these days. Then he'd be——"

Richard could not utter the words that had rushed to his mind. A good impulse restrained him. He felt a little shocked at the wickedness of his thought. After this, he walked on more briskly, as if to atone by obedience for the evil desire cherished for a moment in his heart. But his feet soon lingered again. There was no willing mind in the boy, and his was a nature prone to resist. On his way many attractive things presented themselves, and he stopped here and there—sometimes in forgetfulness of his errand; sometimes in wilful disregard of his father's command—wasting the time and rendering punishment a thing next to certain.

Full thirty minutes had expired when the boy reached his destination.

"Will you step down to the post-office with this letter for me?" asked the gentleman to whom he had been sent with a message. The request was made in such a kind voice, and with such a pleasant smile, that Richard felt that he could go through fire and water, as the saying is, to oblige him.

"Certainly, sir," he replied, in the most compliant manner, reaching out his hand for the letter. "I'll do it with the greatest pleasure."

"As well be killed for a sheep as a lamb," muttered the boy, as he took his way to the post-office. "The half hour's up, and the flogging earned. He can only take the other inch of my life at the worst, and then there'll be an end of it." And he tried to whistle up a state of complete indifference; but the notes he sent out upon the listening air were not light and joyous as the robin's warble, nor sweet and tender as his pet canary's song; for his mind was not at ease.

After posting the letter, Richard sauntered away in a listless, purposeless manner. Going home was not in his mind. There was an angry father there; and punishment awaited his return. He did not feel in the least inclined to meet the flogging within an inch of his life at an earlier moment than was absolutely necessary. A sight of the river which flowed a short distance from the town gave direction to his wavering thoughts, and off he started for the pleasant stream on whose bosom he loved to glide, bending to the light springing oar.

"You don't expect to see him in half an hour, of course," said a gentleman who had witnessed the contest between the boy and his father, and who had not failed to notice the excited and baffled state of Mr. Ramsay's mind. Age, character, or relationship, gave him warrant for this free speech. It was not received as an intrusion, but in some deference of manner.

"He knows the penalty." Mr. Ramsay knit his brows severely. Cruel purpose drew his lips firmly together.

"Which you mean to inflict?" said his friend.

"As surely as there is strength in this right arm!" replied Mr. Ramsay, and he stretched it out vigorously.

"Even to within an inch of the boy's life?" A pair of calm eyes looked into the face of the angry father; a mild, rebuking voice was in his ears.

"I will bend or break him, sir," said he. "That is my duty. What hope is there for a wilfully disobedient child?"

"Small hope, I fear," said the other.

"Then is not my duty plain?" asked Mr. Ramsay.

"There is no question as to your duty, in the abstract, being plain—the duty of securing submission from your child—but it is barely possible that you are not using the right means. Mrs. Howitt has in a single line beautifully expressed a truth that may help you to see some better way to reach the case. Do you remember it?"

Mr. Ramsay shook his head.

"For love hath readier will than fear," repeated his friend.

"Love!" There was a spirit of rejection in the voice of Mr. Ramsay.

We need not be unkind, austere,
For love hath readier will than fear.

His friend repeated the couplet in a low, emphatic voice, his tones lingering

on the words that needed expression, so as to bring out the full meaning they had power to convey. The eyes of Mr. Ramsay were less bold. He showed a slight uneasiness of manner. His stern countenance relaxed something of its sternness.

"A homelier, but more strongly expressed form of the same sentiment is given in the old proverb," said his friend, "made when language went to its meaning by the shortest way. 'Honey catches more flies than vinegar.' Now, my dear sir, having tried the vinegar for a good while, and with most discouraging results, let me suggest your resort to the honey. In other words, change your whole mode of discipline. Speak kindly to Richard, and in a low, firm voice instead of in the bluff, imperative, querulous, or angry manner in which you almost always address him. Let him feel that you really love him; that there is a soft, warm, attachable side to your character, and my word for it, he will move to your bidding with winged feet. I have studied the boy, and see in him good and noble qualities. But he has inherited from his father a certain impatience of control, and a will ever on the alert to resist unduly applied force. By love you may lead him anywhere; but under the rule of fear you will drive him certainly beyond your influence. Forgive my plain speech. I have wished to say this before; but until now, saw no good opportunity."

The whole aspect of Mr. Ramsay underwent a change. Conviction struck to his heart. He saw that he had been unjust to the boy, unloving, unkind. Back to his own early days his thought went with a bound, and there came vivid remembrances of states into which he had been thrown by harsh treatment, states from which no punishment, however severe, could move him. Kindness had always been to his heart like melting sunshine; sternness like an icy wind. And Richard was like him. How strange that he had never thought of this before!

A long sigh quivered up from the oppressed heart of Mr. Ramsay.

"If I could only think so!" he said. "But the obstinate self-will of the boy is so firmly rooted ——"

"That you can never tear it up by force," said his friend. "The only way is to weaken its vital currents, to cut off the flow of life, and let it wither for lack of sustenance, and die."

"Perhaps you are right," said Mr. Ramsay. "But what am I to do now? I gave him half an hour in which to do an errand; laid my commands on him, and enforced them by threats of punishment. Is my word to go for nought? Shall a boy defy me?" he exclaimed, and a flash of anger gleamed over the father's face.

"Gently, patiently, forgivingly, deal with the offender," replied his mentor, as he laid his hand on the arm of Mr. Ramsay. "Let love rule, not anger. Is he all to blame? No. Does not the origin of the wrong lie most with yourself? Has it not grown out of your unwise discipline? Begin correction at the source. First get into your right position yourself, and then bring him right. As you provoked disobedience in the present case, restrain the punishing arm."

"But I shall forfeit my word," said Mr. Ramsay.

"You will do that even if you punish your boy," said his friend.

"How so?" asked Mr. Ramsay.

"You will hardly go to within an inch of the boy's life," was the calm reply. "You were angry, and went beyond yourself. Take counsel of reason, now. Passion and pride are blind impulses, and sure to lead us from the right path. Think away from your present unhappy relation to the unhappy boy, and let love for him prompt you to seek only his good. He is afar off from you now; draw him near, even within the circle of tenderly embracing arms. That is your duty. Do it, and all will be well."

Saying this, his friend retired, leaving Mr. Ramsay to the companionship of his own thoughts. There was now a weight of concern on the father's heart. Anger had given place to a troubled feeling. He drew out his watch as the half-hour advanced to a close; looked at the time, and then from the window, anxiously. If Richard had appeared in the distance, what a sense of relief it would have produced! But there was no sign of the returning boy.

"Wilfully disobedient! Defiant!" The indignant man said this as the hot blood mounted up to his face. "Perverse, unhappy, wrong-headed boy!" This was the father, speaking in reply, and struggling to hold anger in check.

The half hour expired. Richard was still away. Another half hour elapsed, and yet he was absent.

"He shall be punished for this!" said Mr. Ramsay, as indignation gained the mastery. Then a remembrance of the wise words spoken by his friend pressed back the tide of indignation; and he let pity move over the troubled surface of his feelings, and calm them like oil.

A whole hour beyond the limit of time had passed. Mr. Ramsay was growing uneasy. It flashed across his mind that Richard, in a fit of anger, rebellion, and discouragement, might have been tempted to run off. He remembered very distinctly how, once, in his boyish troubles at home, he had meditated the same thing, and actually commenced preparations to abandon his father and mother, and try his fortunes in the world.

At the end of the second hour Mr. Ramsay was in a very anxious state; and he was about making preparation to go out in search of Richard, when, on glancing from the window, he saw him pass in a hurried, stealthy way. He stood listening to hear him enter. The door opened silently. Tip-toe steps sounded faintly along the passage. Mr. Ramsay followed them with his ears, but lost them on the stairs.

"What shall I do?" That was the difficult question for the father. He stood for several minutes, trying to get his thoughts clear and his feeling calm. Thus far his harsh methods had proved wholly fruitless. Threats and punishments wrought no salutary reform; the boy grew worse instead of better. Why this was so, clearer perception now told him.

"Poor boy!" he said with a sigh; and this very utterance of a sentiment of pity helped him to a more pitying state of mind. An image of fear and suffering, instead of hard defiance and reckless disobedience, took a distinct form in his thoughts.

"Now is the time to reach him with gentleness and love." As Mr. Ramsay thus spoke with himself, he opened the door and went out into the passage.

"Did you see Richard, Mary?" he asked, speaking to the servant, who happened to be there at the moment.

"No, sir," she replied.

"I thought he came in just now," said her master.

"I did not notice him, sir," she again replied.

Mr. Ramsay went to the foot of the stairs and called, "Richard!" not harshly, but kindly. No answer came. "Richard!" His voice was louder, but no sound was returned. "I am certain he came in," said he.

"It might have been some one else," suggested Mary. "I haven't seen any thing of him for two or three hours."

Mr. Ramsay went up stairs to the lad's room. The door was shut. He opened it and went in. Richard was lying on the bed. He did not stir, but lay crouching and motionless, like one exhausted by pain. His face was deadly pale. Mr. Ramsay noticed an expression of fear to sweep over it, as the boy's large, bright eyes turned upon him. As he advanced across the room the fear and shrinking changed to something like the anguish of terror.

"O, father!" he said, imploringly, "don't!—don't do it now!" and he lifted one arm as if to protect himself.

Mr. Ramsay understood him. The appeal and movement touched his feelings deeply.

"What ails you, my boy?" The father's voice was low, pitying, and full of tenderness.

Instantly the lines of fear died out of the lad's face. His lips quivered—tears came brimming to his eyes.

"My arm's broke!" he sobbed, and then the tears gushed over his cheeks.

"O, Richard!" ejaculated Mr. Ramsay, as he placed his hand softly on the boy's forehead. "How did this happen?"

"I couldn't get back in half-an-hour, father, without running all the way; and I felt perverse here"—laying his hand on his breast—"and didn't try to go quickly. I went across the river, because I was afraid to come home, and fell from a pile of boards where the saw mills are."

"Have you seen a doctor?" Mr. Ramsay inquired, anxiously.

"Yes, father," replied the boy. "They took me to the doctor's, and he set my arm."

Mr. Ramsay bent over his child, with his hand tenderly pressed on his forehead for some moments, in silence; then, with a full heart, he stooped and kissed him, murmuring, "My poor boy!"

Richard did not understand all his father meant by the exclamation; but he felt that pity, forgiveness, and love, were in his heart, and these were more to him than his sufferings, for, in their warmth and consolation, he forgot his pain.

"O, father!" he said, a light falling on his pale countenance, "love me, and I'll be good!"

Oh, the power of love! Anger, rebuke, remonstrance, punishment—these are but elements of weakness in comparison. How like a sharp thrust from the sword of conviction was this cry for love, sent up to Mr. Ramsay from the heart of his wayward, self-willed, stubbornly resistant, and defiant son.

"Richard"—it was a month from the day on which the arm had been broken—"Richard, I want you to go down to Mr. Baird's for me right quickly."

The father spoke kindly, yet in a firm voice. Richard, who was reading, shut his book instantly, and, coming to his father's side, with a cheerful "Yes, father," stood looking at him, awaiting his message.

"Take this note to Mr. Baird, and bring me an answer."

"Yes, father." And Richard took the note, and, turning from his father, left the office with light and willing footsteps.

"Love hath readier will than fear!"

"Ah, good morning!" said Mr. Ramsay, turning at the sound of a well-known voice, and smiling a pleasant welcome.

"I see you have found the better way," remarked his friend.

"Yes, thanks to your timely admonition," was the reply. "The better and the easier way. A harsh word seems to slacken that boy's feet; while a kind word gives them the wind's lightness."

If parents would only take this to heart, what a change would pass over thousands and thousands of troubled homes! How easy would the government of children become! Love moves by a sweet transfusion of itself, electrically; but anger, sternness, and appeals to fear, rule only by the law governing where force is opposed to force. The stronger subdues the weaker, and there follow perpetual reactions, rebellions, and discord. T. S. A.

SPEAK KINDLY.

Speak kindly!—'tis a simple thing,
Yet bears a wondrous power;
'Twill shed the bloom of summer time
O'er every darken'd hour.
'Twill calm the jarring chords of life,
By grief or passion stirr'd;
Like oil upon the troubled waves,
Is a kindly spoken word.

And they who fought, but yielding fell,
Were wreck'd by passion's blindness,
Though fall'n, may yet be won by love
And blessed words of kindness.

Then let no cold, self-righteous spirit
Place love and pity under ban;
Con well this lesson's holy teachings,
"Deal gently with thy fellow-man!"

Speak kindly!—many a bitter word,
Is thoughtlessly and rashly spoken,
And through years of vain regret
Its galling chains remain unbroken.
The sweetest glimpse of Paradise,
The truest types of Heaven above,
Are beaming smiles, and kindly deeds,
And gentle words of love. R. B. E.

There are four good habits—punctuality, accuracy, steadiness, and dispatch. Without the first of these time is wasted; without the second mistakes the most hurtful to our own credit and interest, and that of others, may be committed; without the third nothing can be well done; and without the fourth opportunities of great advantage are lost, which it is impossible to recal.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

One Who Knows Woman.—You feel very strongly upon the late trial, and we cannot but add that we share your feeling; but there is no hope of the House of Lords barring the succession to the House of Avonmore; and should that successor choose, and should he live, the "Honourable" Major will certainly have a seat therein, provided he be elected. Avonmore is an Irish peerage, and its holder cannot sit in the Lords without election thereto by his peers. But you need not alarm yourself. This is not, and will not be the only crime indulged in by the aristocracy. The Duchess of Kingston was tried for bigamy in 1776. The Earl of Macclesfield was found guilty of embezzling the estates of widows, lunatics, and orphans, and of having sold the offices of Masters in Chancery to incompetent persons. The Marquis of Sligo, who died in 1845, was found guilty of kidnapping Her Majesty's sailors, after making them drunk for the purpose; he was sentenced to pay a fine of £5,000, and to be imprisoned four months in Newgate. The seventh Lord Stourton murdered William Hargsill and his son, and was executed in a silken halter at Salisbury, March 6, 1557. Lord Ferrers was subsequently indulged in the silken cord for shooting his steward. The fourteenth Lord Teynham, a man of a high and noble ancestry, was, in 1833, found guilty of swindling Didymus Longford of £1,000, under pretence of procuring him a place under Government. The Earl of Mar, in 1831, was sentenced to imprisonment at Edinburgh, for shooting at a clergyman. These are a few of the crimes of the aristocracy. Formerly the Norroy King at Arms had the power of degrading nobles and knights, of breaking their swords and tearing their banners. This was last done with the late Lord Cochrane, (the Earl of Dundonald,) and we believe falsely done; his banner is now restored, being replaced by the Queen's order—a very graceful act—on or before his funeral in Westminster Abbey, about November last year. You may depend upon it that no rank in life is free from crime. As for your determination of "horsewhipping the scoundrel," it is Quixotic. If all had their deserts, says our chief bard, "who shall 'scape whipping?" Crime carries its own punishment; the man is a marked man for life, for "of our pleasant vices the gods make whips to scourge us;" nor, again to refer to poetry—often the truest philosophy—neither title nor seat, nor coronet, nor

Florid prose, nor honied lines of rhyme,
E'er blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.

Deceived.—Your case deserves every sympathy, but try what kindness can accomplish. Coercion never yet tamed a woman. It may make her indifferent, sullen, and sly, but never cheerfully obedient, dutiful, and kind. In cases of marital disagreements, there are generally faults on both sides, and we commend the attention of all married people to the following remarks. If we studied ourselves, our interests, and the noble appreciation of the aspirations of which we are capable, we should always be young in heart, pure in purpose, and unvariable in integrity. The youthful freshness of feeling, to which we fondly cling, would rarely desert us. Deeply impressed with the truthfulness of these views, it is perhaps scarcely necessary we should say that our habits are the landmarks by which we must steer our course; and that husbands and wives should devote no small amount of attention to them before they become too largely rooted to be easily eradicated, should their character unfortunately require the attempt to be made. It is true, they acquired many habits before they entered into the matrimonial engagement, and possess others natural to their respective sex; but that argues only an additional necessity for their calling them before the bar of their judgment to ascertain which require reformation, which ought to be dispensed with, and which cultivated.

Lena, Queen of the Isles, Louise, and Marie are heartily sorry for our friend Sam Charleston, and wish to have a description of him, and go through the preliminaries of offering to marry him. Luckily this is not leap-year, so the offers go for nothing. Presuming these letters to be in earnest, we cannot applaud the writers; presuming them to be in fun, we cannot see the joke. How do our young lady friends know what sort of a fellow Sam is? If they are so ready to say "yes," why are not others who surround Sam also not ready? Has Sam another wife? Is he a Mormon? Is he a runaway bankrupt or a ticket-of-leave man? We do not say he is, but he may be. What we counsel is caution and care. Look to every man's antecedents. See how one poor lady must suffer in the Yelverton case! Really, young ladies should be more retiring. Half the unhappy marriages in the world are made through want of caution, and so we will keep Sam close up in our tower of mystery. No, no, young ladies, we will *not* send your letters to Samivel, and he never can and never will meet you. In the meantime we record the fact that a chance offer from an unknown man of mature age has called forth four *bonâ fide* acceptances—

Oh, woman, in our hours of ease
You are not *difficult to please!*

A Vegetarian at Heart.—It is impossible to exist without killing, as the well-known story of the Brahman proves. If the vegetarians carry their theory to its proper conclusion, it is as cruel to crush a wasp as to kill a sheep, since the whole of their argument is based upon the sacredness of life, whether insect or animal.

Bland Close.—Grandfather, father, and son, are considered three generations according to birth. In regard to time, ninety years would be three generations, thirty years being the average life of a generation.

Fitz-Albion calls our attention to the barbarous custom of branding in the Army, and alleges that it has very serious mental effects upon those who are so punished. Very possibly; the Army really wants an immense deal of reform, and the press and public should take the matter up. There can be no valid reason why men who desert should be branded and marked with a "D" all their lives. It is quite true that it is done without physical pain; in fact, the principle is that of tattooing, but the mark is indelible, and it sinks not only into the body, but into the mind, as the suicide of a young soldier at Kensington Barracks lately proved. He had deserted, and voluntarily had returned to his regiment, but slew himself rather than bear the stigma to the grave. This is an awful instance how a punishment injudiciously and, as we hold, unnecessarily severe, may act. We hope that by thus publicly calling attention to the matter we may do some good. A memorial to the House of Commons, or a petition numerously signed, would answer the purpose.

A. H. H.—You say you live near a fortune-teller, whom you have consulted twice or three times, and can safely say on each of these occasions she has told you (by means of a pack of common playing-cards) what has passed respecting you, what business you have transacted, and what kind of a girl you do or may love; whether you shall live to have her, and what kind of a wife she would make.—Now, with due respect for A. H. H., we would tell him that he only here exhibits much credulity. We quite believe that he is convinced of the truth of what he asserts, but we doubt his capacity to sift the evidence. He also says that if he were to have his watch stolen, the "witch" would tell where it was. This is an old trick, and can only be done by connivance with the thief; and, as our advice is asked, we would plainly tell A. H. H. to at once consult, not an editor of a journal, but a police magistrate, who would soon enlighten him as to "which is witch." He may depend upon it that he is now the victim of a gross and almost exploded delusion.

G. S. B.—Your poem has some noble lines in it, some weak, and some good sound ones also, such as these—

"That fools might live, and knaves grow opulent."

"And folds his ragged doublet, plants his staff,
To front the battle of the snow again."

But your faults are those of your masters, Milton, Crabbe, Shelley, and Keats, and Alexander Smith. There are harshness and big swelling words, *ex gr.*—

"And where the plethorous blast long cumulant,"

which is full of sound and fury. Sometimes also your metre is very faulty, but your purpose is high, your lines often noble, and your cultivation not to be despised. Ben Jonson said, "He who would write a living line must sweat, still at thoughts anvil." No one buys blank verse now, and promise is not always performance. When the seven leagued words are deleted you may be proud of your verses.

Lina Bell.—Illinois may be reckoned amongst the seceding states, although we wait confirmation, and the American papers have been spreading most conflicting reports. We simply carried out what we felt and what we knew to be our duty in the essays on America. Our good land is as strong as she is good, and needs no help under that of Heaven. Yet it is pleasant to write of her, and to tell the truth in spite of snarling and ignorant demagogues. England is the best of actual nations, so says an American; let us all do our best to keep her still good, and to make her better where we can. The "smash up" of America, after a short race of eighty years, with everything in her favour, and without example to boot, should certainly tell somewhat on the side of a limited monarchy of eight hundred years' duration. Yet all England grieves, and grieves deeply at the secession.

Arabella.—It is yet customary to give vails to monthly nurses when they exhibit the precious baby, "so like its pa! bless it!" A solemn thing is a new-born baby. Coleridge burst into tears when he saw his, and wrote some noble lines on it. Sairey Monthly always expects half-a-crown, "leastways, if you're gentlefolks, mem!"——Saturday is thought to be the most fashionable day for being married; but why consult fashion in such a case?

Investigator is thanked for his kind and lucid letter, but he will find that we have anticipated all his answers. We should imagine that the most inquisitive of our readers is now set at rest upon that mystery. Nevertheless, we again express our thanks for the continued offers of aid, and the often very admirable hints which we receive from very high quarters, and from the most educated people in the land, even though we are not always able to use them.

X. A. B. Y.—The qualifications for the situation of companion to a lady necessarily vary with the situation itself. Certain requisites, however, are an equable and even temper, conversational powers, pleasant intonation of voice, both in reading and speaking, and general ladylike deportment. In many cases, knowledge of languages is required no less than musical acquirements. The handwriting is ladylike.

J. G.—The Duke of Wellington was a younger son of the musical Earl of Mornington; and, according to the testimony of his brother, the great Marquis Wellesley, he was born at his father's residence in Merrion Square, Dublin, and not at Dargan Castle, as is sometimes stated. Sir James South is the Astronomer Royal.

J. Martin.—Your meerschaum pipe may be repaired by mixing together equal parts of carbonate of magnesia and good plaster of Paris; then add water enough to make it into a paste.

Rosa.—Never attempt to "cure" blushing, as it is the natural emblem of modesty and purity. Like the rainbow, it is "a covenant" between virtue and vice, and is "set up" when there are discordant elements present. Tea is a wholesome beverage; but young persons should take plenty of milk with it to neutralise its astringent properties.—See our article on Tea in No. 821.

X. X.—The will must be stamped and proved within six months after the death of the testator, or it will be subject to a fine of fifty pounds before it can be administered to.

Other Communications Received.—E. D. D.—A. N.—Eglantine.—J. C. H.—Edith.—A. F. D.—Isabelle.—Ralph D. (send them).—S. T.—Gemini.—W. C. B.—E. J. G.—Hebe.—M. H. S.—J. E. R.—J. F. M.—N. B. H.—Euphrosyne.—Sine qua Non (nowhere but at the Herald's College, Doctors' Commons).—J. D. (Crabb's *English Synonymes* is the best; Coles's *What is Euclid;* Davies and Peck's *Mathematical Dictionary;* Trübner & Co., Paternoster Row, E.C.).—Stanmore (both were born in 1784; for the price, Webster & Worcester's).—Constance (a Turkish bath once a week, and a constitutional walk daily).—Lizzie Maud (what he stated is correct; use a softer pen, and write less hurriedly).—A Liveryman (St. Paul's school, to which the Mercers' Company nominates; Mercers' Grammar School; Merchant Taylors' School; Christ's Hospital, and the Charter-house).—V. E. S. J. (Bohn's Handbook of Games).—J. C. (apply to Messrs. Maudsley & Field, Westminster Road, Lambeth).—J. W. R. (send your order to Mr. Goodman, bookseller, 407, Strand, W.C.; what are the particulars you require?)—Florence E. (light-brown; wait his return).—Anxious One (must first pass an examination before the Civil Service Commissioners).—A Lover of Flowers (consult the *Cottage Gardener*).—XXX. (use the Turkish bath).—Veritas (you will hardly meet with such a loan on the terms).—H. W. (read carefully, and never pass over a word which is new to you without looking it out in your dictionary, and writing it down).—Mary and Amy (sure loss of character would follow).—R. A. S. (apply at the Inland Revenue Office, Somerset House).—J. R. B. (apply to an outfitter).—Z.X.Z. (by its bill and legs).—M. A. R. (yes; but it must be sent with real name and address).—Esor (you cannot publish translations without the consent of the author or his publisher).—Mary Jane (it is illegal, and you would not be his wife).—Septimus (not binding on the son).—William V. (First Surrey; green and red).—Gertrude Pauline (in 1759; see his life in No. 836).—Classic Maud (no; good-looking).—Q. M. B. (we cannot recommend the service to any English boy, whilst the mates are allowed to maltreat the crews).—H. R. Rhyl (illegal).—L. M. (taken from No. 834 of *Family Herald*).—Jas. H. (No. 1 is a platitude; No. 2 is old.)—Empress and Sultane (flaxen and dark-brown).—Rowena (yes, to all three questions).—Little Nell (as you gave it to him without an actual engagement subsisting, it is his, and he can do what he likes with it).—Z. R. and Eleanor Jane (send a specimen, with real name and address).—Alton (The Female Servants' Home Society, 21, Nutford Place, and 110, Hatton Garden).—C. B. (apply at the docks to a captain or ship-owner).—A. B. C. (it mostly proceeds from impaired digestion; consult a medical man).—An Hamblonian (apply to the Secretary at the Hospital for Epileptic Patients, 24, Queen Square, Bloomsbury).—Josephine (it is prudent to have the ceremony performed also in a Roman Catholic chapel, to satisfy the law of France).—Louisa (forward the contribution to the Editor of the journal for approval, with request to have it returned if not approved).—Mary Eliza L. (consult a surgeon-dentist; Jer-rald, dis-count, shatoe (*a* as in far); middling).—Typo (*Guide to Typography*, published by Bowering, Blackfriars Road).—Young Briton (you cannot).—Kitty (see No. 526).—J. B. F. (see Nos. 614 and 831; Mr. Cundy, patentee of stoves, 4, Canning Place, Kensington, W.).—Euphemia (apply it after washing, and at night).—A Severe Sufferer (apply to a respectable practitioner in your own neighbourhood).—Emily J. (with pencil water).—M. A. W. (in Nos. 818 to 830).—Florence Arnott (see No. 746; too much flourish).—Florence Annie (see No. 749).—Rough Skin (see Nos 674, 690, and 883).—C. M. (see No. 725).—François (see Nos. 718 and 848).—Esther (see No. 872).—J. John B. (see No. 116).

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FAMILY HERALD.

MATTERS OF FACT.

Facts, says the proverb, are stubborn things. Nevertheless, they would seem to possess occasionally a certain amount of elasticity, or whence does it arise that ten different people shall interpret you one identical fact in as many different ways? The statesman, the manufacturer, the chemist, the philosopher, the statistician, all call loudly for facts—facts and figures—whereon to base their several calculations and opinions. How does it happen, then, that, all starting from a common point, marked and indubitable differences of result are found to exist in matters frequently of the greatest possible importance to mankind?

It is singular to note, first, that the same evidence of the same fact often makes a totally different impression upon different minds. Each man interprets it according to his peculiar idiosyncracy. Hence we shall find that men of strict moral principles and unused to deceit, when informed of some extraordinary event, judging of others by themselves, either attach implicit credit to what they are told, or consider it more charitable to believe that the improbable occurrence has actually taken place—the laws of Nature being specially suspended for the particular occasion—than that the reporter has been guilty of wilful falsehood. Others, self conscious of a looseness regarding truth, and of low moral standard, measure other men's corn by their own bushel, and set down what they hear as based possibly upon fact, largely leavened with imposture. Again, the legal mind, accustomed rigidly to weigh and analyse the statements submitted to it, unfortunately also familiar with the frequency of false evidence, regards a startling novelty with suspicion, submits from habit its own impressions to a searching cross-examination, and treats the fact as doubtful until proved beyond question to be positively true. Further, we shall find that persons of limited education, whose intellect is unfamiliar with strict adherence to accuracy or rule, even although they be conscientious or moral, and people who would shrink with horror from wilful untruth, are yet frequently betrayed by their very habit of mind into unconscious exaggeration. An amusing instance of this is given in our "Random Readings," in No. 925, where, from the servant at No. 1 telling the servant at No. 2, that her master expected his old friends, the Bayleys, on a Christmas visit, the report was spread from house to house with so many improvements, that by the time it reached No. 33, it had assumed the shape of a statement that the police had arrested the tenant of No. 1 for killing his poor dear wife with arsenic, and it was expected he would be executed at Horsemonger Lane, as the facts were very clear against him. Persons of sanguine and excitable temperament also, not being given to strict examination of what they hear, take things as positive which are only mentioned as probable, assume the whole from a part, and make sweeping assertions which they would be sorely puzzled to justify.

It seems scarcely necessary to dwell upon the obvious want of wisdom that would be displayed in placing implicit credence in interested testimony. The vender of a quack medicine, for instance, may be as anxious to do good to mankind by the sale of his particular nostrum as his advertisements of the excellent qualities of the ware declare him to be; and it is also just possible that he is actuated solely by motives of philanthropy in pressing its speedy purchase upon the public. We have no right to deny this to be the case, for no man can be the keeper of his brother's conscience. But where self-benefit is so very clearly involved, we may at least be permitted to doubt. The incautious and the inexperienced only are to be trapped by such transparent artifices as, "More Wonderful Cures," and "Another fine bear slaughtered." So evident is this, that the more astute charlatan will even make a merit of frankness, boldly throw overboard the philanthropic pretext, and candidly admit that he expects to gain profit by the transaction. At the same time he will not omit to tell us that where prevention is so cheap and so easy, while the remedy is within the reach of all, it becomes the duty of every man to provide against the fickleness of Fortune, and to lose no further time in purchasing Dr. Dulcamara's grand panacea for every evil, or a packet of the Patent Preservative Powders against Peril.

Superstition and credulity, again, are facile leaders into error. The strongest minds in every age have yielded to their influence, and are swayed by their imaginary terrors, even in this enlightened age, to an extent scarcely credible. We are apt to be very proud of the time in which we live. We are fond of calling it the latter half of the nineteenth century—as if the age of the world protected it from the follies of senility—the practical era; the epoch of railways, and telegraphs, and machinery, and sound, rational, common sense. We maintain that we have sown our wild oats, and are reaping what farmers call "a thumping crop" of wisdom from the seeds. Every now and then, however, instances crop out, in geologic phrase, of weaknesses that we have been loudly declaring had long since passed away. The belief in witchcraft is not by any means extinct in this country. The records of the police-courts tell how often foolish people are found listening to "cross the poor gipsy's hand with a piece of silver," for the purpose of having their fortunes told, and afterwards find that the swart impostor has eloped with the spoons. Astrology, as a means of extracting coin from the pockets of the unwary, is not yet out of fashion; and we should never be surprised to hear of credulous persons having been induced by some designing alchemist to advance money for the discovery of the philosopher's stone. The Cock Lane Ghost, which mystified the firm brain of the great lexicographer, was but the prototype of the spirit-rapping swindle, which has added many an inmate to the lunatic asylum and the hospital. He were a bold man who should undertake to number the thousands who believe at this instant in table-turning, and spiritualism, and media, and all the rest of the hideous jargon, as firmly as in their own existence. And yet we are a practical people, in a practical age!

Fear and nervous timidity lead to precisely the same result—the falsification of matters of fact. Few people, except doctors, undertakers, and professional nurses, are sufficiently hardy of nerve to pass the night, alone, by the side of some poor remnant of humanity from which the soul has departed; to cross a solitary churchyard at the midnight hour; to remain from sunset to sunrise within the sacred edifice itself, in presence of the mouldering dust of what were once human beings of like fashion and passions with themselves. Yet why? If, as men almost universally declare, we believe that a merciful and all-wise Creator does not permit the departed spirit, after the dissolution of the body, to walk the earth, a ghastly phantom, for the senseless purpose of merely terrifying the living, upon what basis does faith in ghost stories repose? But from the time when Sir Walter Scott gave to the world his *Demonology and Witchcraft*, down to the seemingly well-authenticated details of mysterious apparitions contained in Mrs. Crowe's *Night-side of Nature*—say for the last forty years—entire pages of this publication could be filled with the mere enumeration of the titles of volumes written upon the subject. Tales of haunted houses, haunted rooms, haunted furniture, nay, even of haunted people, are dwelt upon in books, narrated round the Christmas fire, and listened to with a marvel-loving gusto, which proves how deeply a love of the supernatural is ingrafted in our nature. Trace the stories to their source, however, and seldom indeed shall we find that the gloomy horror possesses a more substantial foundation than a diseased bodily condition of the ghost-seer, some accidental arrangement of clothes upon a peg, some play of shadow, twilight, or moonshine, some queer-shaped tree or bush swaying in the evening breeze, some venerable donkey peacefully grazing among churchyard tombs, or, mayhap, some waggish rustic with a sheet, a pole, a lantern, and a scooped-out turnip.

The incapacity of the describer, properly to realise the situation he is attempting to depict, has hitherto been the fruitful cause of many historical errors, which it is now too late to rectify. Some quiet literary man, who probably never smelt powder in his life, except it was used to clear the flue of the kitchen copper, or never shot anything more formidable than a tomtit, sitting in his study has undertaken to describe battles at which he was not present, and sieges of cities, the existence of which he knows of only from his map and the gazetteer. His materials have been drawn from the imperfect journals of his day, or taken down from the mouth of some worthy Corporal Trim, unable, from his subordinate position, to give an account of other operations than those in which he was personally concerned—hearsay evidence, the value of which, in law, is precisely 0. The rare talent of a Macaulay is requisite to give a lifelike and vivid picture of events derived from such a source; and even in the works of that brilliant writer the splendour of the garb in which the facts are arrayed enchains and fascinates the reader more than the accuracy of the facts themselves. Romance is a dangerous source from which to draw historic truth. The novels of Scott—masterpieces of fiction and literary workmanship though they be—are full of anachronisms, inaccuracies, and mis-statements, which the writer was perforce compelled to admit to subserve the exigencies of his plot. The reader who relies upon historical novels and romances for a knowledge of the facts of history leans upon a broken reed. It must be admitted that such productions contain a sub-stratum of truth, or they would not be in keeping with their name; but the halo of poetry and imagination which must be thrown around them, the subordination of reality to the requirements of the story in a succession of startling adventures and "hair-breadth 'scapes" of the hero, the necessity for Art to supplement Nature, where Nature has left what the romance-reader would consider an unseemly void—all these things render an interesting historical romance, which at the same time shall not deviate one iota from fact, an utter impossibility.

Again, many of the wonderful tales related by travellers—so marvellous, sometimes, as to have made the expression "travellers' tales" proverbial—which have subsequently proved fabulous, owe their erroneous origin to disregard of matters of fact. A six weeks' scamper through a country, or over a continent, with the language of which the describer is possibly unacquainted, however it may familiarise the tourist with the outward features of the landscape, can hardly impart to him so thorough an acquaintance with its institutions and the manners and customs of its people, as to entitle him to play the Mentor to an admiring public upon his return. Yet persons have existed, and are still occasionally to be met with, possessed of such belief in their own powers of observation. We of the present day possess advantages with regard to the acquisition of contemporary historical truths denied to our ancestors. Throughout the habitable world, in every capital city—the centres of the wealth, intelligence, and learning of their respective countries—the great leveller and instructor of the age, the Newspaper Press, has correspondents specially charged with the duty of sending home every item of reliable intelligence, bearing upon every subject of interest in the events of the time. "Our Special Correspondent" paints the great feats of war—battles and sieges—in "winged words," which bring them lifelike before the public who "live at home at ease." He shares the soldier's tent, and in the exercise of his duty is exposed to the risk of pestilence and the perils of the field. The war in the Crimea, where a special reporter on the *Times*' staff died in hospital at Balaklava, the campaigns in India and in Italy, and the recent atrocious massacre of Mr. Bowlby by the barbarian Chinese, are instances fresh in the memory of all.

The intricacies of diplomacy, the secrets of cabinets, the terms of a treaty, are now known to the general public frequently for days before the official notification reaches the rulers of the nation. The diligent reader of his paper not only studies contemporary history in the most agreeable manner, but educates himself to understand and take an interest in what is passing all over the world. Through the enterprise of the Newspaper Press posterity will thus be better able to form a more correct judgment of the memorable events now taking place, than we are now able accurately to estimate the history of a bygone age. A file of a high-class journal, two hundred years hence, will present a mine of information, from which the chronicler of the Victorian era

will only be puzzled what to extract by the extraordinary copiousness and value of his material.

We have diverged somewhat from our subject, and after having pointed out so many fruitful sources of error in treating matters of fact, have only space left briefly to consider how it is possible that some of those pitfalls may be avoided. The readiest method of arriving at an impartial judgment of events, would seem to be to credit only such as are well authenticated by persons thoroughly trustworthy, of cool and sober habit of mind, and otherwise well qualified to form an opinion. Also, as it is unwise to take any statement upon trust, wherever it is possible to obtain two or three versions of the same occurrence or experiment, comparison may not improbably evolve additional accuracy. An interested recommendation or statement should always be regarded with suspicion. The opinion of a rash and impulsive person is dangerous. We are much inclined, after all, to consider that the safest course is to regard matters of fact as just so many mathematical problems, the solution of which, by postulates and axioms, is as near an approach to actual truth as fallible human nature can attain.

NIL DESPERANDUM.

I'll never let my heart go down,
Though fortune on me lour,
But quietly take whate'er she sends,
Sunshine be it, or shower;
For though to-day be cloudy,
To-morrow may be fair:
Nil desperandum is the word;
Then never once despair.

If she so dear unto my heart
Should false or fickle prove,
E'en let her go, I'll look for one
More worthy of my love.
Though all my friends forsake me,
Their loss I'll strive to bear,
And tho' their faithlessness may grieve,
Will never once despair.

Should poverty and I e'er meet,
I'll shrink not from the foe,
But fight the battle face to face,
And give him blow for blow;
And every man may conquer him,
If he will nobly dare
To fight the battle bravely out,
Nor sink into despair.

The world's a field of battle,
A struggle hard for life;
With stout hand and a willing heart
I'll mingle in the strife;
And ne'er give in until I win
Of wealth and fame my share;
And if I'm sometimes beaten down,
I'll never once despair.

And come what may, I'll ne'er give way,
And cherish idle sorrow,
Remembering, though to-night be dark,
The sun will rise to-morrow;
And lighter too will grow your grief,
And lesser be your care,
If you will make my motto yours,
And never once despair. R. D.

FAMILY MATTERS.

Practice flows from principle; for as a man thinks, so he will act.

Youth and the lark have their songs for the morning; age and the nightingale theirs for the evening.

Say nothing respecting yourself, either good, bad, or indifferent; nothing good, for that is vanity; nothing bad, for that is affectation; nothing indifferent, for that is silly.

Good Advice.—Never retire at night without being wiser than when you rose in the morning, by having learned something useful during the day.

A Beautiful Idea.—An Indian philosopher being asked what were, according to his opinion, the two most beautiful things of the universe, answered: "The starry heavens above our heads, and the feeling of duty in our hearts."

What Constitutes a Handsome Man?—Well, in the first place, there must be enough of him; or, failing in that—but, come to think of it, he *musn't* fail in that, because there can be no beauty without health, or at least, according to my way of thinking. In the second place, let his voice have a dash of the lion's roar, with the music of a baby's laugh in it. Let his smile be like the breaking forth of the sunshine on a spring morning. As to his figure, it should be strong enough to contend with a man, and slight enough to tremble in the presence of the woman he loves. Of course, if he is a well-made man, it follows that he must be graceful, on the principle that perfect machinery always moves harmoniously; therefore you and himself, and the milk pitcher, are safe elbow neighbours at the tea-table. *This* style of handsome man would no more think of carrying a cane than he would use a parasol to keep the sun out of his eyes. He can wear gloves, or warm his hands in his breast pockets, as he pleases. He can even commit the suicidal-beauty-act of turning his outside coat-collar up over his ears on a stormy day, with perfect impunity;—*the tailor didn't make him;* and as to his hatter, if he depended on this handsome man's patronage of the "latest spring style," I fear he would die of hope deferred; and yet—by Apollo! what a bow he makes, and what an expressive adieu he can wave with his hand! For all this he is not conceited—for he hath *brains*. But your conventional "handsome man," of the barber's-window-wax-figure-head-pattern, with a pet lock in the middle of his forehead, an apple-sized head, and a raspberry mustache with six hairs in it, a pink spot on its cheek, and a little dot of a "goatee" on its cunning little chin, with pretty blinking little studs in its shirt-bosom, and a neck-tie that looks as if it would faint were it tumbled, I'd as lief look at a poodle. I always feel a desire to nip it up with a pair of sugar-tongs, drop it gently into a bowl of cream, and strew pink rose-leaves over its little remains. Finally, my readers, when *soul* magnetises *soul*, the question of beauty is a dead letter. Whom one loves is always handsome; the world's arbitrary rules notwithstanding; therefore when you say "what *can* the handsome Mr. Smith see to admire in that stick of a Miss Jones?" or "what *can* the pretty Miss T. see to like in that homely Mr. Johns?" you simply talk nonsense—as you generally do, on such subjects. Still the parson gets his fees, and the census goes on all the same. Fanny Fern.

Brawn.—Rub one ounce of saltpetre, a little common salt and moist sugar, on the feet, ears, and tongue of the pig; let them lie ten days; then boil them well with three cow-heels and a pickled neats-tongue; cut them up into small bits, pick out all the bones carefully, and put the bits into a round tin, arranging them nicely, and press them down very tight.

FASHIONS FOR APRIL.

(*From the* London and Paris Ladies' Magazine of Fashion.)

The lamented death of Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent has, for a time, cast a gloom on the fashionable world, and occasioned mourning toilettes to be generally worn, which, though offering little opportunity for display, may, by a judicious choice of materials and ornament, unite elegance with taste, and since the adoption of violet and red have been permitted, mourning, unless in deep family bereavements, has not the sombre aspect of former years.

Black taffetas, broché speckled, striped or checked, plain gros grain for dresses with flounces, moires antiques, moires Françaises, are all useful for the moment, to be followed by a new violet taffetas, and various pretty materials suitable for half mourning, all enriched by gimps, which are more than ever fashionable; elegant garnitures are made of it for the fronts of skirts, cuffs, and epaulets, or rather jockeys to match, of silk and bugles, which produce a very rich effect. Gray Cachemires are richly embroidered in black soutache in front, and on the bodies and sleeves; and black taffetas skirts with narrow flounces are worn with Oriental vestes of velvet embroidered in gold; under the veste, which is left open, is a corsage Zouave of muslin, with bouffante sleeves. Black alpagas are made with nine flounces, and high body with buttons.

The bodies of dresses continue to be made high, and round at the waist; the points seem quite reserved for full dress; the trimmings forming brelettes are much used, composed of small revers mingled with plisses or ruches, and the ceintures duchesse are still fashionable. The form of body termed Princesse continues in favour, and is often used for materials with transversal stripes, as also with the taffetas gros grain sprigged in bouquets.

Various forms of sleeves are now used—the elbow sleeve, with cuffs demi large, open with revers; others with plaits at the top, or two bouffants and a frill, or rounded at the bottom, and open, only reaching to the bouffant of the under sleeve.

Skirts are trimmed with narrow flounces in front of the skirt en tablier; this style depends greatly on the material; gimp, velvet in bands, macarons, large buttons, nœuds, plissés, ruches, lace, are all used to trim dresses. Very narrow pinked flounces form a pretty trimming, put on in rows up the front of the skirts, having two only round the back of the skirt, or a single one deeper; the number in front varies from twelve to fourteen, the apron being encircled by a chicorée.

It is rather early to note any marked change in bonnets; more genial weather will cause all the spring novelties to appear. Materials and colours continue to be mixed, and young ladies wear capotes of drawn silk without any trimming. Soft crowns are fashionable, sometimes of black lace over white silk; and crape bonnets capitonné, as well as black lace ones, will be worn. Ornaments of straw are used on bonnets, as well as on dresses and mantelets. A pretty style for the present moment is a bonnet of white tulle, spotted with black, the bavolet and front of velvet, and a bouquet of frosted feathers at the side.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

Paper parchment may be made by immersing the paper in a concentrated solution of chloride of zinc.

Ink Powder.—Sulphate of iron, six ounces; powdered nut-galls, two ounces; powdered gum arabic, two drachms. A teaspoonful to a pint and a half of cold water.

The Black Prince War Frigate.—This fine specimen of naval architecture—the companion of the *Warrior*—lately launched at Govan, near Glasgow, has the following general dimensions:—Length extreme, about 420 feet; breadth extreme, 58 feet; depth, 41½ feet. She has been constructed to carry 40 guns, 34 of which are to be placed on the lower, and 6 on the upper deck. Each side of the vessel, to the extent of about 213 feet, is rendered invulnerable by shot or shell, by armour-plates of wrought iron, from 15 to 16 feet long, 3 to 4 broad, and 4½ inches thick, each averaging upwards of 4 tons.

Stain for Twisted Gun-barrels.—The following is the usual recipe for staining twisted barrels:—Take of tincture of sesquichloride of iron half an ounce, corrosive sublimate one drachm, sulphate of copper half a drachm, nitric acid one drachm to one drachm and a half, spirit of wine six drachms, water eight ounces. Dissolve the corrosive sublimate in the spirit of wine, then add the solution to the other ingredients, and let the whole stand for a month or six weeks, when it will be fit for use. The barrels are first cleaned carefully with lime, and this being removed, the browning mixture is laid on with a sponge five or six times a day, till the colour is dark enough for the fancy. Once or twice a day a scratch-brush is used to remove the rough oxide and allow the acid to get a deeper bite. When it is considered that enough has been done, boiling water is poured over the barrels for several minutes, and, while hot, they are rubbed with flannels and finished with a leather and a little beeswax and turpentine.

The Honey Bee.—The more the anatomy of the bee is studied the more wonderful it will appear. The structure of its eyes, the curious formation of its hind legs and their uses, its pollen baskets and pliers, its wings and component parts, its air-tubes, and their beautiful distribution through the body, the fertilisation of its eggs, and the remarkable power of reproduction in the virgin queen; all these and many other interesting facts may be discovered by a patient microscopic observer and an equally patient naturalist. The attachment of bees to their queen is most extraordinary. They will defend her on every occasion, and are always ready to sacrifice their own lives for her. Should the queen-bee die, the whole hive is in a scene of the greatest disorder. The bees quit it in search of her, and not a single survivor is to be

found. On a hot day bees may be perceived at the entrance and bottom of the hive vibrating their wings with such rapidity that those members are rendered almost invisible. This is done for the purpose of creating and introducing a current of fresh air into the recesses of the hive, thus reducing its temperature or equalising it.

London Water and Cholera.—The Registrar-General, after giving the well-known facts of the case, says it is "beyond a doubt that the mortality of cholera in London was augmented by the impure water with which the population was supplied. It will be remarked that the quantity of organic matter which was so evidently deleterious in the Southwark water amounted, according to the best existing methods of chemical analysis, to two grains in a gallon in excess of that in Lambeth water; that is, 2 grains in 70,000 grains, or one part in 35,000. A person who drank a quart of the water would take only a grain of organic matter, and still less of the fatal ferment. Animalcules and muscular fibre have been found in water containing minute quantities of organic matter; it is evident, therefore, that this fluid in rivers, which receive the sewage of towns, must often contain the elements of zymotic diseases, and can never be circulated through a population for any length of time with entire impunity. And water companies may be assured that the purest water is the most salubrious, and that which is likely to retain the firmest hold on the market. It is therefore of the utmost importance to keep strict watch and ward over the quality of this fluid, which is now supplied to the inhabitants of London by companies enjoying a virtual monopoly under an Act of Parliament. The publication of the results of analysis in Weekly Tables would be of more utility than the publication of meteorological phenomena, over which public companies have no control."

STATISTICS.

During the past five years the number of persons killed by railway accidents has averaged 17 annually, and the number injured has averaged 434 annually.

It is estimated that the cotton yarn annually spun in this country would reach 600,000 times round the earth, or more than 150 times the distance from the earth to the sun.

The desertions from the Royal Navy and Coastguard service afloat were 1,639 seamen and 241 boys in 1858, 1,688 men and 185 boys in 1859, and in the first nine months of 1860, 2,162 seamen and 160 boys; in all, 6,075 in two years and three-quarters.

Importation of Eggs.—In 1857, 127,039,600; in 1858, 134,684,800; in 1859, 148,631,000; and in 1860, 167,695,200. So that the number of eggs imported during the last four years has averaged more than one hundred and forty-four millions yearly!

Population of Poland.—The Poles, though their country is one-sixth larger than Great Britain, comprise less than eleven millions of people divided between three great empires:—Russian Poles, 5,000,000; Austrian, 4,400,000; Prussian, 1,400,000. Total 10,800,000.

Vital Statistics of Scotland.—The sixth annual report (for 1860) of the Registrar-General of births, deaths, and marriages in Scotland has been laid before Parliament. It is but a bare statement of the figures for each county, without note or comment. During the year 105,704 persons were born, 68,055 died, and 42,230 were married. As the population of Scotland was estimated at 3,152,478, the rate per cent. of the births was 3·353, of the deaths 2·159, of the persons married 1·340. The birth rate and the marriage rate did not differ materially from the average of the preceding five years; but the deaths were considerably above the average, which is scarcely an appreciable fraction over two per cent. In England, in the same year (1860), the birth rate was higher—namely, 3·418, and the death rate was lower, 2·113; the rate of marriage is not yet ascertained, but it is always above that of Scotland. On the other hand, Scotland had 9,631 illegitimate births registered in the year, above nine per cent. of the whole number of births, and the proportion registered in England is not very much more than two-thirds of that. The deaths in the eight principal towns of Scotland in January last—2,779—greatly exceeded those of any January since the Registration Act came into operation in 1855. This is partly to be attributed to the prevalence of small-pox, scarlatina, and diphtheria, and partly to the severity of the weather. The deaths in the eight towns in 1860 (26,028) were in the high proportion of 286 in every 10,000. For every three deaths in London there were four in the Scottish towns. In Glasgow, one-half of the deaths in the year were of children under five years of age. The mortality was heaviest in Glasgow and Greenock. In Edinburgh it was 229 in the 10,000, and the Registrar-General notices the advantages that city possesses in its exposed site on sloping hills, and the consequent thorough ventilation of even its most densely-peopled low streets and closes; were its drainage, surface as well as underground, and its sanitary arrangements in the lowest class of dwellings, somewhat improved, and overcrowding prevented, he has no doubt that it would prove one of the healthiest towns of the kingdom.

VARIETIES.

The London District Telegraph Company now forward messages to all parts of London and the suburbs—fifteen words for 6d., and twenty words for 9d. Addresses free, and porterage free within certain limits. Seventy stations are now open.

A Curiosity for Naturalists.—The workmen employed in digging the foundation for the new assembly rooms at Pontypridd, South Wales, when about six feet below the surface, came in contact with a hard substance, which proved to be a live tortoise firmly wedged in the sand. The creature showed good signs of animation, and began to feed on some vegetation which was offered to it.

Curious Prophecies.—In the catalogue of M. Libri's library, about to be sold by auction, mention is made of a rare volume, printed in 1654, entitled *Allæi Liber Fati Universi*, or Book of Universal Fate, the real author of which is said to have been a Capuchin friar named Yves, in which, under 1860, "great prosperity and the extension of her borders" is predicted for France, the verification of which would seem to be the Italian campaign, and the annexation of Nice and Savoy. The Fire of London, of 1666, was predicted as a great calamity to England in that year, and 1884 is marked down as the most disastrous in her career.

The Great Exhibition of 1862.—The designs for the Great Exhibition building are completed and drawn. The building differs in many essential particulars from its predecessor. It will be much larger, and more imposing in its interior; while from without its aspect will be of remarkable magnitude and grandeur. Glass and iron are no longer to be the chief features in the design, and are only to be used where lightness with ornamental effect is needed. Externally the building will be 1200 feet by 700. The average height will be 100 feet, nearly 60 of which will be solid brickwork. Taking one of the main sides of the building, on the Exhibition Road, as an example, it will present a lofty recessed façade, from the centre of which will rise a dome of glass and iron to the height of 250 feet, with a base of 160 feet diameter. These—for there are to be two, one at each end of the building—will be the largest domes ever built. That of St. Paul's is only 108 feet in diameter at the base, that of St. Peter's 139, the large dome of the British Museum, 140, and that of the Pantheon of Rome, 142 feet. These domes are to be reared over the intersection of the nave and transepts at right angles; and as the floors beneath both will be elevated above the level of the floors of the rest of the building, an unequalled view will be obtained from these raised floors through almost every part of the vast interior. One magnificent nave will be continued from this entrance in the Exhibition Road to the extreme end of the building in the grounds of the Horticultural Society, and at the termination of this the second dome will rise. The nave is therefore to be 1200 feet long by 85 wide and 100 high. The transepts, in which it terminates at either end, will be each 700 feet long by 85 broad and 100 high. All the roofs will be of wood coated with felt, and will meet in the centre at an angle, like the roof of Westminster Hall and most of our old cathedrals. The effect, however, from the interior will not be that of an angular roof, as the girders will be arched and coloured. On the side walls, beneath the roof of all the naves and transepts, will be a clerestory 25 feet high of glass and iron, which, with the light from the domes, the glass and iron entrances, and the windows in the walls, will make the light as equal as it was in the old building; while, by the present one being erected due east and west, the glare of the sun will be obviated. The inside, as heretofore, will be entirely fitted with iron columns and girders, but arranged in more Gothic form and style, and with a keener view to picturesque effect than in 1851. The picture gallery will run the whole length of the structure, and will be built of brick, with a wall thickness of about two feet. The pictures will not be hung higher than 20 feet from the floor.

THE RIDDLER.

THE RIDDLER'S SOLUTIONS OF No. 933.

Riddle: *An Egg.* Enigma: *A Yard Measure.* Charade: *Light-house.*

The following answer *all:* Wood.—Maida Vale (use name or initials).—Errington.—Jamson.—Jelley.—Portland Place.—Moir Smith.—Lemuel.—Chearley o Jims.—West Firle (yes).—Deering.—H. G. W.—Shipley.—Carr.—Rawlinson.—Sadler.—J. N. B.—D. M.—W. J. R.——*Riddle and Enigma:* Summers.—Malvern.—Sharpe.—C. J. S.—Cotton.—Hesketh.——*Riddle and Charade:* Neptune.—Rubini.—P. B.—R. C. H.—Tom.—Acne (see No. 526).—J. A. S.—Nordey (we will look).—Tyro.—Belle Percival.—J. T. A.—Ada Hartley.—Amer.—Nelly.—Topsey.—Evan C.—G. E. L.—Richardson.—Talbot.—Mousley.—Charlton.—Lynch Hill.—Tootell. ——*Riddle:* Eckersley.—T. W.—Hudson.—M. Blazdell.—Lewen.—D. S. D.——*Enigma:* Botolph.—Emma W.—Clara J.—Hall.——*Charade:* Drayton.—Emily B.—T. J. R.—Eurydice.

ARITHMETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. *They will meet again in 73 days.*
2. *The number of Tiles required will be* 1211·38.

Note.—Although 1211·38 tiles are equal in area to that of the room, nevertheless this number of tiles *unbroken* cannot be so placed as to exactly fill the space required. Thirty-six tiles may be placed in the first row, and 25 such rows will nearly equal the width of the room; so that only 900 hexagonal tiles *unbroken* can be first laid; then 306 must be cut into equilateral triangles, to fill up the regular interstices, and about 5½ more must be used to fill the remaining spaces left at one side and one end. Veritas.

3. Let $x\ y\ z$ represent the 3 digits. The first equation will be $\frac{xz}{yz}=\sqrt{x}$. From this equation $x=y^2$. The second equation is $\frac{xy\times(z-y)+z}{2}=y+z$. From this equation $yz-y^2+1=y+z$. We must supply the want of a third equation by considering the limits of x, y, and z. It is evident that as $x=y^2$, x must be equal 9 or 4, and y either 3 or 2; but x cannot be 9; for on this assumption z would, from the 2nd equation, be 5½, and the number would be 935½; but this is not a whole number. Hence x must be $=4$, $y=2$, and z from the 2nd equation will be $=5$. Therefore the 3 digits are 4, 2, and 5; and the number required is 425, assuming z to be greater than y. But if y be supposed greater than z, then z will equal 1, and the number 421 will satisfy the conditions imposed by propounder, who, in alluding to the difference of the 2nd and 3rd, does not state which is the greater, leaving the question ambiguous. Veritas.

The following agree with *all:* Veritas.—Richardson.—Sadler.—Summers.—R. E. N.—Maida Vale.—Edward.—Smiles.

With 1st and 2nd: Jeans.—R. M. W.—Corporal.—E. T. J.—T. M.

With 1st and 3rd: D. S. D.—Wood.—G. N. C.—Douglas.—Wardle.—Carr.

With 1st: Xit.—Scroggie.—Mousley.—Errington.—Rawlinson.—Charlton.—North.—James E.—W. W. W.——*With 3rd:* Tootell.—G. S. M.—Warre.—Hesketh.

The Query for a Debating Club.—*Mr.* Hart *by his* art *won the* Heart *of an artizan's sweet*heart. *Was he more* art*ful than* Heart*ful?*

The following have solved the *Query:*—Eurydice.—Drayton.—Hudson.—Eckersley.—Mousley.—Richardson.—Talbot.—J. B. N.—Wood (solutions to the Riddler should reach us as soon after the date of the Number as possible).—Chearley o Jims.—Maida Vale.—Jamson.—Bredall.

Solutions which arrived too late to be inserted in their proper places in No. 934:—Cantab.—Ugolino.—Johnson.—Wood.—John.—Edwin.

RANDOM READINGS.

When Mr. White looks black, does he change colour?

Why was Bonaparte's horse like his master?—Because he had a martial neigh.

A little girl hearing it remarked that all people had once been children, artlessly inquired, "Who took care of the babies?"

"I say, Bill," asked an insulting fellow, "why is your hat like a giblet-pie?"—"Give it up."—"Why, because there's a goose's head in it."

There is a tradesman in Oxford Street who is so opposed to pugilism that he refuses to advertise his goods, fearing he might hit the public taste.

"I think I have seen you before, sir; are you not Owen Smith?"—"Oh, yes, I'm owin' Smith, and owin' Jones, and owin' Brown, and owin' everybody."

One day, at a farm-house, a wag saw an old gobler trying to eat the strings of some nightcaps that lay on the ground to bleach. "That," said he, "is what I call introducing cotton into Turkey."

"Go to the d—l!" said Lord Thurlow one day, when storming at his old valet. "Pray, give me a character, my lord," replied the fellow, drily. "People like, you know, to have characters from their acquaintance."

A friend, in conversation with Rogers, said, "I never put my razor in hot water, as I find it injures the temper of the blade."—"No doubt of it," said the poet; "show me the blade that would not be out of temper, if plunged into hot water."

Two gentlemen, noted for their fondness of exaggeration, were discussing the fare at different hotels. One observed that at his hotel he had tea so strong it was necessary to confine it in an iron vessel. "At mine," said the other, "it is made so weak it has not strength to run out of the tea-pot."

"Now, gentlemen," said Sheridan to his guests, as the ladies left the room, "let us understand each other. Are we to drink like men or like beasts?" Somewhat indignant, the guests exclaimed, "Like men, of course." —"Then," he replied, "we are going to get jolly drunk, for brutes never drink more than they want."

When Voltaire was on his death-bed, many visitors called—all of whom were denied entrance to his chamber. Amongst them was the Abbé Chapeau, who came to offer the consolations of the Church. When his name was announced by the servant, Voltaire said, "I came into the world *bareheaded*, and I shall leave it without a *chapeau!*"

Joseph the Second of Austria was fond of travelling incognito, and one day he reached a little inn on his route before his retinue came up. Entering a retiring room he began shaving himself. The inquisitorial landlord was anxious to know what post his guest held about the person of the Emperor. "I shave him sometimes," was his majesty's reply.

A little lawyer appearing as a witness in one of the courts, was asked by a gigantic barrister what profession he was of; and having replied he was an attorney, "You a lawyer?" said Briefless. "Why, I can put you in my pocket!"—"Very likely you may," rejoined the other; "and if you do, you will have more law in your *pocket* than you ever had in your *head!*"

"Here, John," said a gentleman to his servant on horseback in the rear, "come forward, and just take hold of my horse while I dismount, and after I am dismounted, John, you dismount too. Then, John, ungirth the saddle of your horse and put it down; then also ungirth the saddle of my horse and put it down. Afterwards, John, take up the saddle of your horse, and put and girth it on my horse. Next, John, take up the saddle of my horse, and put and girth it on your horse. Then, John, I will seat myself in your saddle, and we will resume our journey."—"Bless me, master," said the astonished servant, "why couldn't you have simply said, Let's change saddles?"

In the Paris Court of Correctional Police, recently, a lady, by no means young, advanced coquettishly to the witness stand to give her testimony. "What is your name?"—"Virginie Loustatot."—"What is your age?"—"Twenty-five." (Exclamations of incredulity from the audience.) The lady's evidence being taken, she regained her place, still coquettishly bridling, and the next witness was introduced. This one was a full-grown young man. "Your name?" said the judge. "Isadore Loustatot."—"Your age?"—"Twenty-seven years."—"Are you a relative of the last witness?"—"I am her son."—"Ah, well!" murmured the magistrate, "your mother must have married *very* young."

Sir Francis Head, speaking of the pleasures of the chase, gives an anecdote of a hard arguer in favour of fox-hunting, in these words:—"Said the haughty Countess of —— to an aged huntsman, who, cap in hand, had humbly invited her ladyship to do him the honour to come and see his hounds, 'I dislike everything belonging to hunting—it is so cruel.' 'Cruel!!' replied the old man, with apparent astonishment, 'why, my lady, it can't possibly be cruel, for,' logically holding up three fingers in succession, 'we all knows that the gentlemen like it, and we all knows that the hosses like it, and we all knows that the hounds like it; and,' after a long pause, 'none on us, my lady, can know for certain that the foxes don't like it.'"

THE FORESIGHT OF SOME FOLK.

"Well, neighbour, have you heard the news?
It quite confounds belief!
That interesting maid at Lamb's
Is proved to be a thief!
She's stolen—Oh, such a lot of things!
And been at length detected."
"The little fox! I'm not surprised,
'Tis just what I expected."

"And Rich, of 'Commerce House,' has fail'd
For some three thousand pounds;
The creditors came down on him
Just like a pack of hounds!
His trade so thriving seem'd, that I
At first the fact rejected."
"You did! I'm not the least surprised,
'Tis just what I expected."—SAMUEL E.

THE SPRING-TIME OF LIFE.—Our dancing days.

ADVICE FOR THE GUIDANCE OF HENS DURING THE COLD WEATHER.—*Lay still.*

A FALSE-HOOD.—On being shown a portrait of himself, very unlike the original, Hood said that the artist had perpetrated a false-Hood.

THE SIX STAGES.—Man is at ten, a child; at twenty, wild; at thirty, tame, if ever; at forty, wise; at fifty, rich; at sixty, good, or never.

ROMANCE AND REALITY.—It was an incorrigible old bachelor who said, "Though some very romantic maiden may exclaim, 'Give me a hut with the heart that I love,' most of the sex vastly prefer a palace with the man they hate."

MISFORTUNE NEVER COMES SINGLY.—"Well, I declare, it's just like my luck," exclaimed a poor unfortunate merchant in the Borough; "here have hops been rising lately ever so high; and now, I'm told, the Poles have risen also."—*Punch.*

AN ANCESTOR OF GENTLE BLOOD.—At a time when Curran was called before his college board for wearing a dirty shirt, "I pleaded," said Curran, "inability to wear a clean one, and I told them the story of poor Lord Avonmore, who was at that time the plain, untitled, struggling Barry Yelverton. 'I wish, mother,' said Barry, 'I had eleven shirts.'—'Eleven, Barry?—why eleven?'—'Because, mother, I am of opinion that a gentleman, to be comfortable, ought to have the dozen.' Poor Barry had but one, and I made the precedent my justification."

A GOOD REJOINDER.—A worthy clergyman was roused from his sleep at five o'clock in the morning by loud talking at the side of a fish-pond in his grounds. His reverence put his night-capped head out of the window, and saw three men standing by the side of his pond. "What are you doing there?" said he. "Fishing," said they. "But you are trespassing on my land; you must go away."—"Go to bed again," was the rejoinder; "your Master was not in the habit of sending away poor fishermen." The good clergyman could, of course, only turn in again.

TRYING THE COLOUR.—An old lady from the country went recently to a linen-draper's shop and began examining a piece of cotton-print. She pulled it this way and that, as if she would tear it to pieces, held it up to the light in different positions, wetted a corner and rubbed it between her fingers, trying if the colours were good. Then she paused awhile, seemingly not entirely satisfied. At last she cut off a piece with a pair of scissors she had dangling at her side, and handing it to a tall, gawky-looking girl, of about sixteen, standing beside her, said, "Here, Lizzy Jane, you take an' chaw that, an' see if it fades." Lizzy Jane put it into her mouth accordingly, and dutifully went to work.

AN IRISH FEMALE TENANT.—"I'll trouble you for my month's rent, madam," said a landlord last Monday to one of his tenants.—"Is it yer rint ye ax for now?"—"Yes, mam, two rooms at two shillings per week each."—"Ah, now, can't ye wait a little time? Sure the likes of ye must have plenty of money," replied the woman, looking at the thin, bent form of the landlord with great contempt.—"But, my dear woman, the money is due, and—".—"Oh, murther, is it dearing me, ye are? an honest, married woman, and blessed mother of siven boys, each big enough to lick the life out of ye. Out of my house, ye munster!" and, unable to give vent to her indignation in words, she seized his coat collar, and fairly threw him into the street. The owner intends to let his agent collect the rent of that house in future.

THE KING AND THE SEIDLITZ POWDERS.—On the first consignment of Seidlitz powders in the capital of Delhi the monarch became deeply interested in the accounts of the refreshing-box. A box was brought to the king in full court, and the interpreter explained to his majesty how it should be used. Into a goblet he put the twelve blue papers, and having added water the king drank it off. This was the alkali, and the royal countenance expressed no signs of satisfaction. It was then explained that in the combination of the two powders lay the luxury, and the twelve white powders were quickly dissolved, and as eagerly swallowed by his majesty, with a shriek that will be remembered while Delhi is numbered among the kingdoms. The monarch rose, staggered, exploded, and in his full agonies, screamed, "Hold me down!" then, rushing from the throne, fell prostrate on the floor. There he lay during the long-continued effervescence of the compound spirting like ten thousand pennyworths of Imperial pop, and believing himself in the agonies of death—a melancholy and humiliating proof that kings are mortal.

AN AWFUL MUDDLE.—The following is a melancholy illustration of the uncertainty of the types. A young gentleman by the name of Conkey having been united in the holy bonds of wedlock, sent the marriage notice, with a couplet of his own composition, to a local paper for publication, as follows:—

"Married—On August 1, A. Conkey, Esq., Attorney-at-Law, to Miss Euphemia Wiggins:—

"Love is the union of two hearts that beat in softest melody;
Time with its ravages imparts no bitter fusion to its ecstacy.'

Mr. Conkey looked with much anxiety for the issue of the paper, in order to see his name in print. The compositor into whose charge the notice was placed happened to be on a spree at the time, and made some wonderful blunders in setting it up—thus:—"Married—On April 1, A. Donkey, Esq., Eternally at Law, to Miss Epheunia Piggins—

"Jove is an onion of two heads that belts in softest melony;
Time with its cabbages imparts no better feed to an extra dray."

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